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THE PRESIDENT'S war-debt message proved all over again how inevitably the demands of domestic politics conflict with the demands of intelligent international procedure. What else could Mr. Roosevelt have said as long as his main object was to get Congress out of Washington by the middle of the month? On the other hand, what could he have said that would have served better to irritate every European nation and further confuse the long-drawn-out debt discussions? Boiled down to a sentence, Mr. Roosevelt told Congress that he had no intention of doing anything about debts and so they might as well go on home. It is quite evident from the response it received that the message produced the effect intended; it was variously described as "strong," "firm," "patriotic," and "sound." Only Senator Glass spoke a negative word and in doing so admitted that his attitude was "different from that of most members of Congress." We do not mean to suggest that the President is deliberately distorting his own view for political ends. The fact is, rather, that Mr. Roosevelt thinks exclusively in political terms. Since his domestic program is far more important in his eyes than any temporary disturbance of our relations with Europe, more important even than the possible stimulation of our foreign trade, the question of debts must be subordinated to the more pressing realities at home.

THE EFFECT of Mr. Roosevelt's debt message appears in the tone and content of the British note received in answer to it. With extreme dignity in which the note of grievance is carefully subordinated, the British government recalls its declaration of December 1, 1932, reiterates that the inequity of the debt situation makes further payments in full impossible, points out the burden which the English people have assumed in making payments so far, and states that, while it has no intention of repudiating its obligations, it cannot resume payments at the old rate. Since under the terms of the Johnson Act further token payments are unacceptable, future payments will depend upon revision of the debt structure. The rest of our European creditors will presumably follow the British lead. In other words, by insisting on all we shall get nothing. By refusing revision downward of our war-time loans, we shall probably lose the whole $11,000,000,000 which we now claim.

AFTER A NINE MONTHS' PERIOD of "experimentation" the steel code has again been extended by the Administrator, this time, however, after elimination or modification of some of its most objectionable features. The astounding provision, to which we called attention in a recent editorial, permitting the Board of Directors of the American Iron and Steel Institute to compel any member of the industry to file a higher base price if the quotation originally submitted was believed by the board to be "unfair" has been entirely eliminated. The number of authorized basing-points for price quotations has been increased somewhat in order to silence the complaint of some of the most vociferous objectors to the original list, while the "all-rail" freight delivery charges may no longer be assessed against a customer who chooses to use a cheaper method of transportation. An important gain to labor is found in the adoption of the eight-hour day, and simple justice has been extended to piece workers by the new requirement that they shall be included under the minimum-wage provision. The most important change is contained in a new provision which gives the government representative limited veto powers over decisions of the code authority. These modifications leave much to be desired from the standpoint of the consumer of steel products. Before he can be given reasonable assurance that prices are established on a truly competitive basis, the ten-day waiting period on the filing of price quotations must be eliminated and the list of basing-points extended to include every production center in the industry. However, the changes already made are steps, although small ones, in the right direction.

THE CANNERS who said "can't," or more bluntly "won't," when urged by the AAA to put a quality-standards clause in their code, were apparently unable to convince or persuade the President. He approved the much-fought-over canners' code *subject to the inclusion of a quality-standards clause.* Worse still, General Johnson's forwarding letter recommended that the Food and Drug Administration be legally empowered to enforce the observance

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of the government grades, and that its budget be proportionately increased. Does this mean a belated victory for the consumer interest? Certainly the big canners are hit, as the bitter lamentations of the food editor of the New York *Journal of Commerce* attest. "One will pause to consider," he remarks in the issue of June 2, "the tremendous patience and perseverance of this man Tugwell." Two days later, however, the writer of the Business Outlook column in the same paper has a cheering thought: "These clauses," he writes, "have been approved too late for application during this canning season. By the middle of the next season the NRA is now scheduled to expire. As a result, these code provisions may remain inactive until the future of the NRA, and then the final form of organization of the canning industry, have been decided upon." In other words, the big canners, backed by the newspaper and magazine publishers, will stall and fight to the end. For what? For the privilege of "educating" the consumer to buy advertised brands whose price exhibits no dependable correspondence with the quality of the food in the can. Also, of course, to keep in leash the independent canners who constitute 80 per cent of the industry, some of whom testified at the code hearings that government grades are used in the canning industry—up to, but not including, the point of sale to the consumer; further that they would rather like to see government grading established as it would enable them to get a dependable product to the consumer at a reasonable price, and to compete successfully with the advertised brands.

"LEFT WING seizes the Socialist Party," headlines the New York *Times* over its account of the Socialist convention. The Battle of Detroit was long overdue and one is glad that it was fought to a decision, even though this decision may be difficult to consolidate. It is worth asking just what this Socialist Party is which has been "seized" by its left wing. How left is left? Now that the left wing has seized the Socialist Party, what will it do with it? Who will get the party funds and the party property and how? And finally, is there any power of cohesion left in the varied left, center, and right-parliamentarian composition of its membership, torn as it has been for years by inner factional strife? Will not this miscellaneous proletarian, small-business, and professional-class material dribble out of the left hand that has seized it into the right hand of a secedent Old Guard, and into the outstretched hands of the official Communist Party, the expelled Communist factions, and such new formations as the American Workers' Party and the Farmer-Labor Federation? Judging from the continuing reverberations from Detroit, some of these questions will be answered fairly soon. The new platform threatens a general strike against the threat of war or fascist counter-revolution and goes even farther left in the following passage: "If the capitalist system should collapse in a general chaos and confusion, which cannot permit of orderly procedure, the Socialist Party, whether or not in such case it is a majority, will not shrink from the responsibility of organizing and maintaining a government under the workers' rule." This, while not enough to satisfy the extreme left Socialists, was far too strong for the Waldman-Lee-Oneal cohorts. Where will they go, these ancients? And what about the extreme lefts, who are reported to be even more disaffected than the Old Guard? On the whole, it would seem probable that the official Communist Party will benefit least of all from the inevitable splits and secessions to come. Perhaps the most important result is negative. But in any event the total effect is to clarify the situation and to facilitate a realignment of parties.

SETTLEMENT of the Electric Auto-Lite labor dispute at Toledo, if it proves to be as satisfactory as the initial agreement indicates, will be a decided victory for militant workers' action. The troops have been withdrawn and Judge Stuart has postponed decision in the injunction case for a third time. The company, through its president, C. O. Miniger, has signed a contract which grants recognition to the union, provides for the extra 5 per cent wage increase involved in the strike, brings the women workers 5 per cent above the code in wages, and provides for the return of all strikers to the three plants affected. Louis Budenz, secretary of the American Workers' Party, warns, however, that the Electric Auto-Lite Company is under pressure from the Automobile Chamber of Commerce, with whose policies the Auto-Lite Company, as a large manufacturer of automotive parts, is tightly bound up. The American Federation of Labor failed to force a showdown in Detroit, and now that weak policy is coming home to roost in Toledo, where the issue still hangs in the balance. This much can be said: that the strike would never have come to the stage that it has reached today had it not been for the audacious violation of the injunction. The Auto-Lite workers, aided by the Unemployed League, did force a showdown and the employers yielded. In that sense a fighting union policy has scored a great victory in Toledo, just as in Minneapolis the militant spirit and excellent organization of the striking truckmen forced a favorable settlement.

THE ORDER for a 25 per cent curtailment in production in the cotton-textiles industry has gone into effect; hourly wages have not been raised; and the United Textile Workers of America has withdrawn its call for a walkout of mill operatives. On the surface, it would appear either that the union officials were maneuvered into a bad settlement or that they backed down at the last minute from threats they never seriously intended to carry out. But the objections raised by Messrs. McMahon and Gorman to the curtailment order were only a pretext; they were part of a bargaining game in which the union sought to gain concessions which would consolidate its hold on the workers in the industry and clear the way for the all-important task of organizing the textile workers in the Southern mills. Such concessions the United Textile Workers have seemingly succeeded in gaining. A representative of the union will be appointed to the Labor Advisory Board of the NRA. Another union representative will be appointed labor adviser to the government members of the Cotton Textiles Code Authority. And the membership of the Cotton Textiles National Industrial Relations Board will be extended to include one more employer member and one more employee member, the latter presumably an officer of the U. T. W. A. These may seem like purely formal concessions, but they are the first overt recognition by the NRA of the fact that the union is entitled to have something to say about "self-government" in the industry. So far the U. T. W. A. has been the stepchild of the NRA; it has been without representation

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on the Labor Advisory Board, the Code Authority, or even the Industrial Relations Board of the industry. Now at long last the union will be ushered into the inner circle. It is regrettable, nevertheless, that the union so readily consented not to press its protest against the curtailment order. If it is reemployment at which the NRA codes aim, how can that be achieved by reducing job opportunities?

IN APPROVING the revised iron-and-steel code, the President has pledged his word that the wage-earners of the industry will be permitted to participate in elections of representatives for collective bargaining. It is doubtful, however, that the rank-and-file leaders (Forbeck, Spang, Irwin, *et al.*) of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel, and Tin Workers will regard this as enough of a consideration to justify calling off the strike. The President's orders, assuming he sees fit to deliver them, may mean as little to the United States Steel Corporation, Bethlehem, Republic, Youngstown, and National as those delivered in the past by the Labor Board. First, Judge Nields's recent decision in the Weirton case suggests strongly that the government would find it exceedingly difficult to win any court tests on the election issue. Furthermore, suppose elections were held and the Amalgamated representatives were chosen, would the steel companies be willing to execute collective agreements with the union? Would the companies even be willing to begin negotiations toward that end? We already have the collective assurance of the Iron and Steel Institute, and the individual assurances of its constituent members, that under no circumstances will an outside trade union be "recognized." This can mean only one thing: that the steel employers will have nothing to do with the Amalgamated, elections or no elections. The union leaders are well aware of this; and that explains the extraordinarily militant tone of the reproaches they addressed to the President last week, notwithstanding his approval of elections. Like it or not, the President must awaken from his roseate dreams of "industrial self-government" and face the brute fact that a fighting spirit is at work in the trade unions.

INFECTED, doubtless, by the news from Toledo, Minneapolis, and San Francisco, the New York literati last week added a small but unique ripple to the strike wave. It appears that the Macaulay Company, publishers, had, in the opinion of its employees from the editorial staff to the typists, been running its business a bit too arbitrarily. Specifically, it has summarily fired Miss Dorothy Rimmer on the alleged ground that she had been organizing the employees of the firm into a local of the Office Workers' Union. Promptly fourteen of the eighteen employees of the firm walked out, including Isidor Schneider, poet, novelist, and Guggenheim Fellow, and Miss Susan Jenkins, one of the editorial staff—everybody, in fact, except the shipping department. Also, they picketed the building and threatened to bring the entire cast of "Stevedore" to swell the picket line. Finally, they invoked the power of mass pressure in the form of a deluge of telegrams and letters from eminent authors, including some from writers who had signed or pending contracts with the firm and threatened to cancel or withdraw them. The demands were for recognition of the union and reinstatement of Miss Rimmer. As we go to press it is reported that the unhappy publishers are still determined to "run their own business in their own way." And the literati are still picketing, side by side with the clerks and typists. It sounds funny, chiefly because it is unusual. On the whole, it strikes us as establishing an excellent precedent.

THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT, echoing the words of José Maria Gil Robles, Jesuit fascist leader, has declared the harvest throughout the country a national emergency and ordered the crops to be brought in under government supervision with the aid of the Civil Guard and the shock-troop police—this in answer to a call for a national agrarian general strike, supported by all labor except a few Catholic unions in the north. The strike is the first serious nation-wide move against the offensive of the counter-revolutionary government which took power after the elections to the Cortes last fall. Since then the government has restored the state subsidy to the clergy, freed the monarchist and fascist rebels from jail and exile, restored to their former rank monarchist military men involved in the Sanjurjo uprising, removed Socialist and Communist mayors throughout the country, suppressed and persecuted the independent and labor press, and, most recently, revoked the law providing that landlords in each municipality must first employ labor in their own region—a law passed to combat the traditional practice of undercutting by using immigrant Portuguese labor. The strike is significantly an expression of the united-front movement started first in Barcelona by dissident Communist, Syndicalist, and Anarchist groups. It is now functioning in the form of workers' councils in about half of Spain, and although supported only half-heartedly by the Socialist Party and the Iberian Anarchist Federation, and fought by the Communist Party, it nevertheless makes steady headway, for the great mass of Spanish workers are hotly in its favor. They are keenly aware that united action is their only sure, strong weapon against fascism.

IT IS NOT UNLIKELY that the late Governor Rolph's chief claims to fame will be first that he did not grant a pardon to Tom Mooney and second that he publicly condoned a lynching in the most overt, brainless, and altogether deplorable official support of lawlessness that modern times record. Shortly after the bodies of the alleged San José kidnappers and murderers had been cut down, "Sunny Jim" Rolph said: "This is the best lesson that California has ever given the country." Nor were these shameful words said in hot blood, for the Governor reinforced them later by explaining that he had not called out troops to prevent a lynching because in effect he did not really wish to see the lynching prevented. Under the auspices of the American Civil Liberties Union, a brief was drawn up duly charging Governor Rolph with murder in the first degree. But the crime of which he was guilty—and it is a worse crime than simple homicide—was that of using his high office to urge on the dogs of cruelty, cunning, and mass hysteria. Whether or not the people of California would have repudiated Governor Rolph at the polls next November will never be known. A disarming geniality of temper was probably the reason that he had been Mayor of San Francisco for twenty years before he was elected Governor of the State. It may, indeed, have been this very good nature, this unwillingness to risk offending any but the defenseless, that betrayed him into the act for which he will be longest remembered.

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War Clouds over Geneva

THE assembling of the statesmen of the world at Geneva to administer the last rites to a rapidly sinking Disarmament Conference appears to have greatly facilitated political maneuvering in anticipation of the coming war. For while the formulas of disarmament continue to be bandied about in public, the back-stage negotiations bespeak a callous acceptance of Premier Mussolini's recent assertion that war is perhaps "the tragic destiny of man." In the foreground the problem of German rearmament continues to overshadow all else. Although it is freely admitted that a degree of rearmament is inevitable, France remains obdurate in its determination not to sanction this step unless it be accompanied by guaranties of security, which Britain, at least, is unwilling to give. The present session of the conference had scarcely got under way before Louis Barthou dispelled all hope of a last-minute compromise on this issue by responding with an ill-timed display of Latin temperament to Sir John Simon's plea that France "bridge the gap" separating it from Germany. Not only did the seventy-two-year-old French Foreign Minister declare that he must refuse to allow a "single Power"—Germany—to impose its will on the representatives of "nearly all the world," but he went out of his way to ridicule the none-too-adroit British spokesman to his face.

This turn of events was particularly distressing in view of the favorable atmosphere created on the opening day, May 29, by the really excellent speeches of Norman Davis and M. Litvinov. Declaring that the American people are aroused at the evils being revealed in connection with the traffic in arms, Ambassador Davis told the conference of President Roosevelt's desire for an international convention effectively regulating the manufacture and shipment of munitions. He also reiterated the American government's suggestion for a progressive abolition of those types of weapons particularly suitable for aggressive warfare, as well as its willingness to enter into a universal pact of non-aggression. While lacking a concrete proposal which would serve to break the European deadlock, Mr. Davis at least made it plain that he was not satisfied with the status quo. But, as on previous occasions, it was Litvinov who most successfully fired the imagination of all present when he proposed that the conference be transformed into a permanent, regularly assembling parliament of peace. The Soviet representative also urged the imposition of sanctions against violators of the Kellogg-Briand pact, and suggested an ingenious formula which would allow the United States to adhere to such a plan without assuming the same responsibilities for security as would fall upon the leading European states.

Behind the scenes, however, the various governments are already directing their policies on the assumption that the Disarmament Conference has failed. Mussolini announced on May 26 that Italy would build 70,000 tons of new battleships as its contribution to "disarmament." And the press has been filled with reports of political realignments which remind one unpleasantly of Europe in 1914. By far the most significant of these is the projected agreement of mutual military assistance between France and the Soviet Union. As a counter-move to the alleged understanding between Nazi Germany and a recalcitrant Japan, both independent of League restraints, the proposed pact is said to provide for an exchange of military plans between the general staffs of the two countries, as well as for technical collaboration similar to that which existed for many years between the Soviet Union and Germany. Complementary to the military agreement, a multilateral pact of mutual assistance against aggression is planned, open to all countries and based on the definition of an aggressor which Litvinov submitted to the Disarmament Conference on February 6, 1933. The sponsors hope that in addition to the Little Entente it will be possible to secure the adherence of most of the countries bordering on the Soviet Union, particularly the three Baltic states—Esthonia, Latvia, and Lithuania—where fear of a Nazi attack is especially acute. That the pact will also be open to Germany is of crucial importance, for it is only through the inclusion of the Reich that it can become an effective instrument of peace rather than merely a defensive alliance of the type that existed prior to the war. Whether Germany is interested in a joint undertaking to preserve the peace of Europe remains an unanswered question.

In order that the mutual-assistance pact may not conflict with existing peace machinery, it is evident that provision should be made for bringing the Soviet Union into the League of Nations as quickly as possible. While no official statement has yet been made regarding Moscow's attitude toward this proposal, it may be assumed that the Kremlin will welcome any step which promises protection against the possibility that Hitler may seek to carry out his dreams of expansion toward the East. For the League, however, Russia's entry raises many perplexing problems, particularly since Poland may be expected to oppose Soviet entrance unless it also is granted a permanent seat on the Council.

What should be the attitude of the United States in the light of these latest developments? Surely, no one can view the trend of events and its possible consequences without serious perturbation. As measures of security, alliances are even more treacherous than armaments, and are the very tinder from which a world conflagration may be expected to spread most rapidly. But does not the failure of the Disarmament Conference imply a return to the war system and all that is involved? Perhaps not of necessity, but our first task is clearly to save the conference if it is humanly possible. If these efforts fail, as now seems inevitable, a general security pact such as Litvinov suggests, involving sanctions against an aggressor, is probably the next best resort. To make such an agreement, however, it is necessary to enlist the active support of all the nations of the world honestly desiring peace. It will also involve implementing the League, the Pact of Paris, and all of the existing machinery of peace by every possible means. All this may be bad news to Mr. Hearst and other isolationists, but if any lesson is to be learned from the ill-fated Disarmament Conference, it is that peace can only be attained at a price. And while the price is infinitely less than that of war, it must be paid in advance.

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One Year of Section 7-a

A YEAR has passed since Section 7-a of the National Industrial Recovery Act became the law of the land. It was believed by some hopeful souls a year ago that Section 7-a's purpose was to stimulate the formation of trade unions to run parallel with trade associations. But the ink of the President's signature was hardly dry, the NRA was still a mere skeleton, when Messrs. Johnson and Richberg made it plain that the Administration did not intend to force trade unions upon reluctant employers. The NRA would not insist that the labor provisions of the codes be the fruit of collective bargaining. The NRA would not turn over the enforcement of these provisions to organized labor. The NRA would not demand, where trade unions existed, that the employers recognize them and negotiate agreements with them. The NRA would maintain a strict neutrality between trade unions and company unions, keeping an eye out only for coercion. And the NRA, although it intended to see that the workers were not done out of their rights of collective bargaining, would be equally scrupulous in seeing to it that nobody interfered with the sacred right of individual bargaining between employer and employee. To this position, or its close equivalent, Messrs. Johnson and Richberg have held ever since.

Under Senator Wagner's influence, the National Labor Board worked out a theory of Section 7-a more comforting to organized labor than that put forward by the NRA. True, the Labor Board was created to suppress strikes—by soft words and tactful urging. But in the process of so doing the board fell back upon traditional democratic ideals and evolved, in substance, the following formula for the maintenance of industrial peace: Workers were to choose their representatives (individuals or labor organizations) at secret elections. With these representatives the employer was bound to bargain collectively. He must recognize them, negotiate with them, and exert every reasonable effort to execute with them an agreement, preferably written, covering wages, hours, and working conditions.

Unfortunately, the board was without legal powers, so that its interpretation of 7-a remained a theory. A few strikes were ended; an occasional employer was argued into treating with a trade union that was pretty powerful to begin with. But in practically every major attempt to apply its theory of 7-a, the board fell down. It could not get the owners of the captive mines to recognize the United Mine Workers, election results notwithstanding. It backed away from Mr. Ford in the Edgewater and Chester controversies. It never succeeded in compelling the Budd Manufacturing Company to bestow upon its employees the benefits of an election under Labor Board auspices. The Weirton Steel Company defied the board on the election issue, and has just defeated the board in the federal courts. The President snatched the threatened automobile strike away from the board, and "settled" it. The chief result of the board's attempts to apply a democratic concept of Section 7-a was that a group of Reading, Pennsylvania, hosiery manufacturers signed an agreement with a trade union, and that another hosiery manufacturer in Tennessee lost his Blue Eagle.

The NRA would not and the National Labor Board could not do anything to help the trade unions. But meanwhile, snapping out of its depression lethargy, the A. F. of L. began to organize workers in mass-production industries, for example, automobile and rubber, where the trade union was formerly taboo. Some individual unions, of the "industrial" rather than the "craft" type, were even more successful. The United Mine Workers swarmed over into the Appalachian area and compelled the non-union operators to sign an agreement. The needle-trades unions consolidated their hold on the metropolitan markets, and even made substantial headway in the out-of-town open-shop regions. The hosiery workers' section of the textile workers' union made trade unionism a reality in the mills of Berks County and elsewhere. Even the slumbering steel workers' union awoke, with the consequence that a general steel strike now threatens.

But the anti-union employers fought back. With the automobile and steel industries to the fore, company unions sprang up on the industrial landscape like cacti after a desert rain. Though ostensibly sanctified by Section 7-a, these unions were formed for the purpose of shutting out any possible trade-union intrusion. They are apparently here to stay. Nothing will rid labor of them save an avalanche of strikes with full union recognition as their primary objective. Are Toledo and Minneapolis the premonitory rumblings of such an avalanche? There and elsewhere it has been shown that organized labor cannot afford to pin its faith on the wisdom and power of a supposedly classless government. Magna Chartas or no Magna Chartas, it looks as though the trade unions in the United States would be able to get from the big-business employers only as much as they are able to win by force majeure.

Satan Still Finds Work

LEISURE has always seemed to us one of the most beautiful words in the language, and to speak of the "use" of leisure time is almost to utter blasphemy. Leisure, surely, is the privilege of doing what one wants to do with deliberation, or of doing nothing with security, conviction, and nonchalance.

Hence it was with a feeling akin to consternation that we read the just-published report of the Committee on the Use of Leisure Time of the NRA. Leisure, it appears, has become a "problem," and despite the tragic earnestness with which the committee has approached this problem, its chairman, Raymond B. Fosdick, and its distinguished members, including Nicholas Murray Butler, Alfred E. Smith, Matthew Woll, and others, are not sure they have solved it.

Evidently the premise on which the committee based its study was the ancient Christian aphorism, "Satan still finds work for idle hands to do." But who is this Satan? Apparently he is, as usual, a mysterious, abstract, almost metaphysical personality. Mr. Fosdick, who procured a financial subsidy from the Rockefeller Foundation to aid the NRA committee in thwarting the wiles of the devil, seems to think of him as the state, or society, or, even more vaguely, civilization. In opening the series of conferences last November at which the data of fact and opinion were assembled concerning the machinations of the Adversary, Mr. Fosdick breathed defiance as follows:

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> A museum is no substitute for bread, and a playground is no roof against the winter sky. I do not care to be a party to any attempt to provide an ornamental façade for a social system that cannot find work for its people.... Unless we can solve the far greater problem that confronts this nation today, all this talk of the satisfactory use of leisure is empty words. But for myself, I have faith to believe that we shall solve this problem.

After this outburst one turns to the report almost with a thrill of hope. Page on page that hope recedes. The "free" hours of the 10,000,000 adults who constitute the industrial population of Greater New York are counted over every one apart. In telling the beads of this rosary, it appears that half of these people are unemployed and hence completely exposed to the temptations of the Adversary. But even the other 5,000,000 have an average of forty-one hours a week of free time. What to do? Retro, Sathanas! With moving eloquence, the committee recommends that the school buildings, parks, and museums be more adequately used for baseball, basketball, lectures on civics, and so forth; that more classes for adults be established, not merely for vocational instruction, but in such broad cultural courses as literature, drama, rhythmic dancing, clay-modeling, and the like.

By page 96 one is obliged to concede the decision to the Adversary. The devil, whether he is society, civilization, the NRA, Mr. Rockefeller, or the group personality of Mr. Fosdick's committee, certainly has found work for idle hands to do. Indeed, it becomes difficult to distinguish the Powers of Light from the Powers of Darkness. Do not Mr. Fosdick and his committee represent the state, society, civilization, the breakdown of which has brought forth this "problem" of the "use" of leisure time? Surely it would be false modesty for them to pretend otherwise.

In speaking of himself, this eleemosynary Satan uses the first personal plural pronoun. "We," it appears, did not find it appropriate to consult the unemployed or the insufficiently employed as to the disposition of their leisure time, any more than the NRA Labor Board and the President could permit the automobile workers to control their jobs by establishing the closed shop. When they are consulted, workers are likely to be rather forthright. For example, in "The Plight of the Coal Miner," by Homer L. Morris, we find recorded the following objection of coal-camp parents to the choice of a comedy for a school entertainment:

> Why should our children participate in such foolishness? Why should we be exposed to the unrealities of a comedy? We live in a world of hard and strange facts. Our savings have all been used during the past two years since the mine closed. We don't know how we are going to get food for our next meal. Our lives are full of tragedy, pain, suffering, and want. We have no desire for the make-believe of comedy. The worries of unemployment have driven all prospects of pleasure out of our lives.

Clearly it is only a matter of time before we shall witness a wave of strikes against this "use" of leisure time, rivaling the present wave of industrial strikes; a kind of holy war against both the "made-leisure" and "used-leisure" activities of the Adversary. In imagination we see already the marching columns and hear their militant chants: "Down with Rockefeller-financed leisure!" they will shout. Also "Rythmic dancing, my eye!" And finally, "We say it's civics, and the hell with it!"

Poetry Is Popular

FREQUENTLY, but with ever recurring amazement, we give a few moments to the "Questions and Answers" department of the New York *Times Book Review*. It is exclusively devoted to the task of locating quotations, and its anonymous editor feigns an ignorance so complete that when, as occasionally happens, some troubled subscriber seeks the source of a line like "The plowman homeward plods his weary way," or wonders if any reader can help him find a poem called "If," this editor gravely passes the question on and later gravely prints in an extended list the names and addresses of erudite correspondents who hastened to share by post their unusual knowledge. But such occurrences are rare, and the wonder usually is, not that the lines in question are unfamiliar, but that anyone could have any possible reason for wishing to know them.

Consider, for example, the issue of May 27. A certain "G. D." wants the name of a poem written in answer to "Invictus" and ending with the words "Christ is the Master of my fate; Christ is the Captain of my soul." "P. K." labors under the delusion that some one original thinker is to be credited with the observation, "Nothing matters much; most things not at all," and is willing to spend at least a postage stamp to find out his name. "M. K." is looking for a poem about grandmother's wooden chair which is said, somewhat improbably, to begin: "There it stands in the corner, with its back to the wall, the old wooden rocker"; and "C. B.," for reasons which it is hard to penetrate, burns with desire for a complete poem beginning: "Oh, soft falls the dew, as the twilight descendeth."

What is more, each of these perverse desires stands a very good chance of being gratified, since the same issue contains a group of answers to queries no less remarkable. Did not three eager readers help "J. G. O." to find "Far-famed Old Kentucky"? Did not Mr. E. Robb Zaring of New Albany, Indiana, reply to a certain "A. J." who wanted a gem called "Training the Other Woman's Child"? Did not, furthermore, four named correspondents as well as others too numerous to be mentioned enlighten a troubled "E. J." with the knowledge that the lines he was seeking were by Ruth McEnery Stuart and that they were published in 1913 in "Daddy Do-Funny's Wisdom Jingles"? Who says we are not a literary people or that poetry is no longer popular? Hundreds of us, it is evident, keep clippings from obscure "family papers," treasure the names of poets who would be called forgotten if it were generally suspected that they had ever been known, and pore over volumes called "Fireside Selections" or "Heart Throbs."

Gelett Burgess once confessed that he first broke into print by requesting an unpublished poem composed by himself and then under another name supplying it the following week. Perhaps the trick is still being used, and if so it will explain some of the cases in which two persons claim to know verses which seem, on their face, unlikely to be interesting to more than one. But though we should rather not, we suspect that most of the questions and answers are genuine. They merely prove how little any literary critic knows, and what can be not only remembered but cherished and brooded over in doubtless very honest hearts.

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Issues and Men

Josephine Roche for Governor of Colorado

PICTURE to yourself a hall in a small town situated in the coal fields of Colorado. It is none too well lighted. The seats are filled with rough-looking miners and their wives—even a few children. Many of them show by bent backs that they have toiled for a lifetime with the shovel and pickax; many are sons and even grandsons of miners. It is easy to see the effects of years of inadequate pay, of the never-ending uncertainty which for decades, for a generation, has been the chief characteristic of life in those coal regions. The people wait patiently but not long, for their boss and employer is usually on time. There she comes—the woman who holds their destinies in her hands—not very large, quick of action, sweet and smiling of countenance. The minute she enters the hall every soul in it rises to his or her feet. No cowering or toadying here, nothing forced, nothing dictated by habit or convention. These hard-handed workers rise for her because they know their boss to be their best friend, their anchor to windward; because they respect, admire, and trust her. They know of the sacrifices she makes for them, of her unfailing devotion to them and their interests.

But even they cannot wholly understand how great Miss Roche's sacrifices have been. Miss Roche works day and night for her mines and their workers until one trembles for her nerves and health. Every cent of the interest which comes to her as the majority owner of the company goes back into that company to keep it afloat. She occupies the house of friends, Senator and Mrs. Costigan, while they are in Washington during the sessions of Congress, and the Buick she drives is neither streamlined nor knee-actioned; it suggests nothing so much as a worn-out, spavined Dobbin, more than ready for the pasturage of old age. The speedometer of that car shows many thousands of miles, a large portion of which Miss Roche ran up while campaigning to make that aforementioned friend of hers one of the two Senators from Colorado.

It will be a new experience for Josephine Roche to be working to advance her own fortunes. I know that she will profit if she makes her Rocky Mountain Fuel Company a rich and successful concern; there will be cynics, I suppose, to say that her devotion to her miners is in part devotion to her own future bank account. To this I answer—nonsense! Had she been concerned with her profits she would have sold out long ago and let the workers go hang. Actually she has never thought or worked for herself since she took over the company. When she became majority owner after her father's death, she found an organization bitterly opposed, like every other mining company in Colorado, to organized labor, and she reversed that policy the minute she could. She invited the union to organize her miners. But she did not stop there. Experience in social-settlement work in Boston and New York had taught her not only the needs of the laboring masses but how to get on with them, how not to patronize, and she promptly won the faith and confidence of those who depended upon her. Her company, however, was heavily in debt because its resources had been used up in endless labor troubles, and her laboring force was inadequately paid, working far too few days in a year, improperly housed, and about hopeless of ever having decent pay and decent living conditions.

There was the problem. It would have daunted any experienced business man, for all through the Colorado mining industry there were cutthroat, underhand competition, price slashing, stealing of customers by any possible trick, all the skullduggery, commercial crookedness, and ruthless salesmanship with which America carried on its mad battle for riches in obedience to the private-profit motive. Against the other groups Miss Roche and her aids—Mr. Costigan, John R. Lawson, and others—had to fight for their commercial lives. She came East, found friends and admirers, and went back to carry on as the chief champion of organized labor in the Rocky Mountain States. And her sacrifices have had their reward. Her company is afloat while others, like the Rockefeller-owned Colorado Fuel and Iron Company, bloodied by the horrible Ludlow massacre of members of a tent colony—striking miners and their wives and children—are now in the hands of receivers. Josephine Roche's miners have proved for everyone to see that union labor in a cooperative enterprise like this works more economically and produces more tons of coal per man per day than unorganized labor. Her miners have worked more days per year than those in any other mine in the State and been envied of all the others. Incidentally, her workers and union labor throughout Colorado have been her best sales force. "Buy from Josephine" has been their slogan.

A wonderful achievement—though not yet out of the woods; how wonderful only the insiders can know. And now Miss Roche is out for the Governorship. The suggestion did not come from her but from the editor of a farm newspaper in northeastern Colorado. It spread like wildfire across the State. Organized labor is with her to a man. Of course Miss Roche is for the truly liberal policies of President Roosevelt. The NRA code for the Colorado coal fields she herself largely helped to draft; for the first time that human jungle, in which her mines were the only refuge, is organized as it should be. Unfair practices are eliminated; for the first time labor is assured a square deal and decent living conditions. Miss Roche may not yet have won her fight, but, thanks to the NRA, the reforms for which she hungered have arrived—let us hope to stay.

Every woman in Colorado and every man there who believes in justice, in fair play, in a decent way of life for all who toil, in a square and new deal, and in a decent economic world will vote in the Democratic primary and the election for Josephine Roche.

Oswald Garrison Villard

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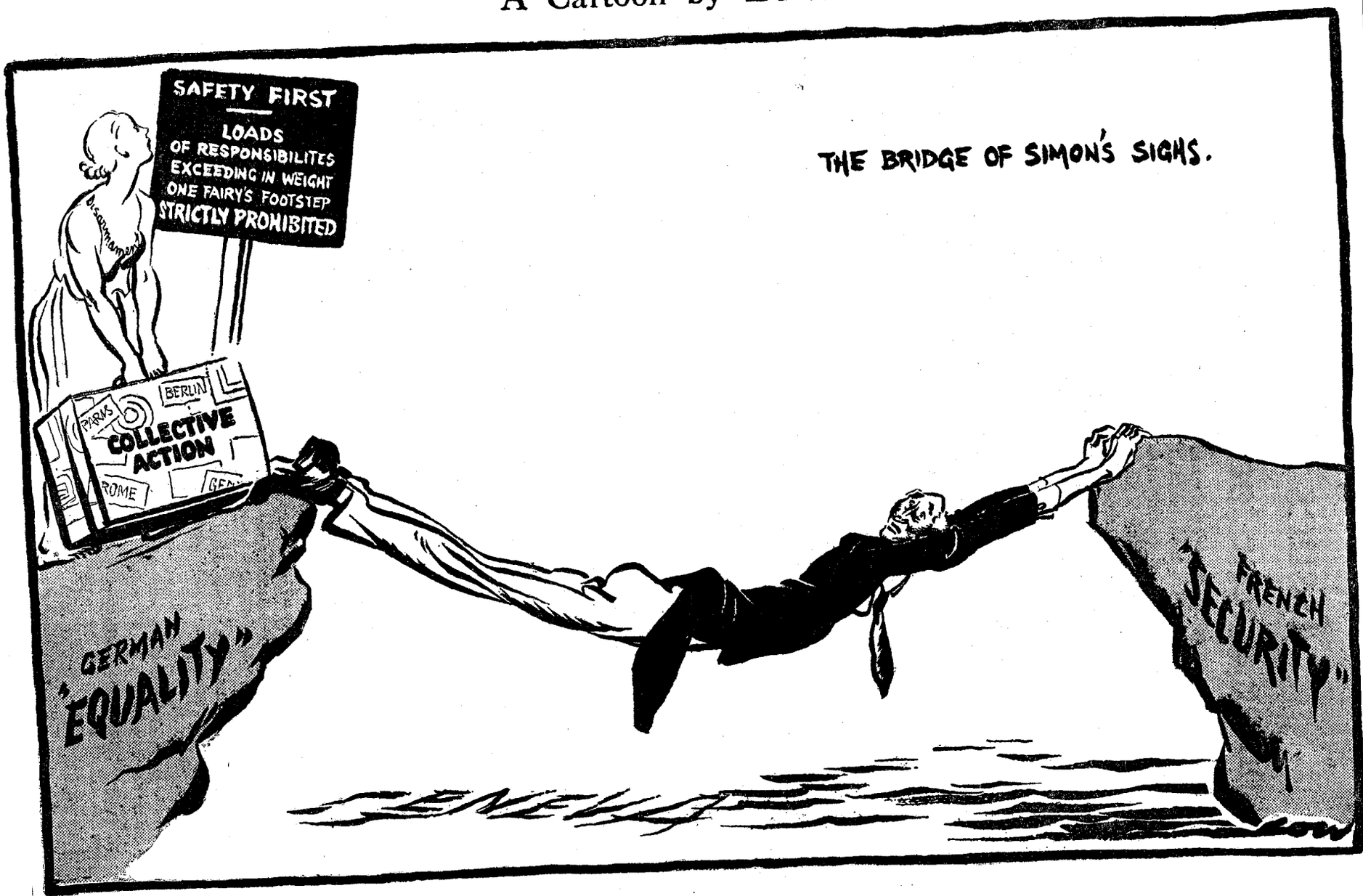
A Cartoon by LOW



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In Russia Life Grows Easier

By LOUIS FISCHER

Moscow, May 8

A BEAUTIFUL pure-Aryan woman who traveled in my compartment from the Dutch border to Berlin declared that in this modern age we missed many of the homely amenities of the Middle Ages. "We have made a fetish of progress," she said. Her Nazi friends have been fighting the machine—"because it throws men out of employment." At the recent congress of the German lignite industry President Heubel warned that this anti-machine tendency would ruin production. Ruhr factories are experiencing difficulty in finding young apprentices ready to go through three or four years of patient training before becoming masters. Why should they when there may be a war before then? Much better to march the streets, sing songs, and cry "Heil Hitler." Germany is buying certain quality steels and aeroplane parts abroad because she can no longer manufacture them herself. Germany's productive capacity is not developing, and the government, wisely, does not wish it to develop. For such plant expansion would cause more overproduction and thus enhance the economic crisis. Hitler is spending large sums to employ the unemployed, but they are put to work making roads, digging canals, clearing woods —not building factories. That would be undesirable progress. A Nazi philosopher writes: "To become more agrarian means to become poorer and more primitive, perhaps to become more uncivilized and barbarous, but on the other hand it means to become more German." Oswald Spengler inveighs against the "optimism of progress," and Nazi thinkers have suggested that the orbit of progress is perhaps elliptical. A fascist leader once accused the Bolsheviks of "deifying progress." They do. They maintain that progress, to be progress at all, must move in a straight line.

More and more, as one goes from the Soviet world into the West and back again, one senses this philosophical and psychological distinction. In an increasing number of bourgeois states people are happy if they can "hold their own." They want stabilization. The slogan is "recovery" rather than advance. And where, in quite isolated cases, peculiar circumstances make for new construction, leaders are haunted by an omnipresent fear of the slump which avenges the boom.

A dark pall seems to be rolling farther and farther over Europe. How much spiritual uneasiness, mental depression, and concern about the future! Materially Soviet life may still be hard. Most Western countries are far more comfortable than Russia. But in Russia the prospect is bright, and everyone is convinced that conditions are improving and must continue to improve.

Since I left the U. S. S. R. in January, the rise in the standard of living has been considerable and obvious. But I think people expected more and expected it more quickly after the tremendous sacrifices required by the first Five-Year Plan. Perhaps the rate of growth will now be geometrical. Meanwhile, the feeling of disappointment that the first year of the second plan did not lead the entire population straight into a paradise of plenty has dampened enthusiasm and intensified the demand for better conditions.

My most vivid visual impression in Moscow came from the excellent clothes worn by many men and women on free days when folks don their "Sunday best." Never since the revolution have Muscovites dressed so well. Obviously the inhabitants possess a change of clothes and are now able to discard their work-a-day garb for finer apparel on sabbaths. On week days shoes, suits, and dresses look better than they did six months ago, and on free days the clothes are good, not alone by old Russian standards but absolutely. A large percentage of those who wear new suits, spring overcoats, and shoes are young factory hands. In Istanbul, Athens, Madrid, and other capitals the traveler has merely to walk ten minutes away from the center of the town to find himself in poor districts where the appearance of human beings, houses, and streets is strikingly worse. The Bolshevik revolution, however, was a churning process, and workingmen are just as likely to live in what were formerly exclusive residential sections as in the factory faubourgs. Moreover, the working-class outskirts of old St. Petersburg today often present a better picture than the central thoroughfares once graced by the palaces and villas of nobles and the rich, now neglected and dilapidated. In this respect, though not in most others, a leveling has taken place. The result is that while the well-dressed workingman who moves in the hub of town frequently improves its exterior aspect, his presence in outlying districts erases the usually sharp differences between these and the well-manicured center of the city.

The food situation, too, is much better than it was last winter. There is scarcely anything one cannot buy—if one has the money. The ordinary cooperatives where citizens make purchases on their ration cards still maintain very low prices, but they sell only bread, meal, potatoes, herring, sugar (600 grams a month for non-proletarians and a double ration for workers), and, infrequently, tea. Bread costs a ruble for two kilograms; sugar two and a half rubles a kilogram. Workingmen and some government employees obtain supplementary food and clothing at higher than cooperative but lower than commercial prices in closed factory stores, which may be well stocked, but even these fortunates must occasionally, and the rest of the population must always, resort to the very high-priced commercial stores to which all have access if they can pay. In them first-grade butter costs 35 rubles a kilogram, cheese 20 rubles a kilogram, sugar 15 rubles a kilogram, tea 80 rubles a kilogram, soap 2½ rubles a cake, and so on. In a closed cooperative men's suits cost between 40 and 100 rubles. But what is a ruble? A paper ruble is worth about one gold cent or one gold halfpenny. Compared to world standards these Moscow prices are therefore not excessive, are perhaps quite moderate. Prices, however, must always be considered in connection with earnings. Wages, of course, vary, and I know persons who earn anywhere between 100 and 1,500 rubles a month. The average income of a worker is approximately 140 rubles a month, but to know how much he can purchase for this sum one must first ascertain what he receives in his closed factory cooperative at reduced prices, and this is different in each plant. It

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is possible to assert quite categorically, however, that the standard of living went up in the last semester and is rising faster now. This is obvious in streets, theaters, and private homes. It was reflected distinctly in the jolly May Day parade: both the military and civilian sections of this demonstration showed that the country was richer. Factories spent more money on decorations and floats. There were more tanks and aeroplanes; finer uniforms—Red Army soldiers must now wear white collars inside their khaki collars; more singing and dancing among the marchers.

The period of great strain which commenced in 1928 and continued throughout the trying years of the first Five-Year Plan is now ended. All individuals feel this. The nation dares to relax. Industry has acquired momentum. Pig-iron production, which averaged 17,100 tons a day in April, 1932, and 18,600 in April, 1933, jumped to 28,700 tons a day in April, 1934. The corresponding figures for steel are 17,300 tons, 17,200 tons, and 26,100 tons; for coal 184,600 tons, 197,600 tons, and 251,000 tons. This progress in heavy industry is matched by equally remarkable advances in the light industries which yield articles of daily consumption. The fundamental idea of the first plan was the postponement for four years of the payment for the nation's efforts. Today the state is paying its debts to the population.

The air of prosperity and the sense of satisfaction which this circumstance produces are marred by the sharp struggle to earn more in order to obtain more worldly goods, some of which are today available to the masses for the first time in Russia's history and many of which became scarce after 1927. Soviet Russia must still face a number of complicated problems of distribution and production. The basic fact, however, is the present possibility of walking into a store and getting what one needs.

The first Five-Year Plan gave the U. S. S. R. these material benefits and something else: security from foreign aggression. For the first time in my twelve years in Russia Bolshevik leaders assert in private that the country will not be attacked during the next twelve months. The fortification of the Far Eastern frontier, with the aid of the products of new industries established between 1928 and 1933, accounts for this unprecedented spirit of national confidence. Hitherto every Western statesman's speech and every trip of a foreign general-staff officer was interpreted in Moscow as a move against the Soviet Union. Greater economic strength and bigger armaments have now dissipated this exaggerated Soviet fear complex. The Kremlin is convinced that Japan is too cautious and too preoccupied with Chinese and home affairs to engage Russia single-handed, and moreover that Tokio will this year find no allies in Europe. Thanks to the cordial rapprochement with France, the Soviet Government's foreign political position is so powerful that it may not have to yield to French suggestions to join the League of Nations, and the abatement of the Japanese menace together with Russia's favorable gold and foreign-currency balance will make a difference in the Soviet attitude toward America and toward Western nations generally. There is probably some warrant for the guess that England will get more Soviet trade, and Germany and the United States less, than many observers predicted.

Safety from invasion augments the Red Army's already great popularity. War Commissar Voroshilov is vying with Lazar Kaganovich for the honor of being second to Stalin. At the party congress in January the delegates manifested much affection for him. His sun is in the ascendancy. The party congress elected a new central committee—the most influential body in the U. S. S. R.—which includes more than the usual number of army leaders among its members and deputy members. Though its functions are largely civilian, the G. P. U. has military status. It is also, in part, an army separate from the major national forces. Not long ago a delicate rivalry sprang up between the Red Army and the G. P. U., and a desire arose among the military to modify the status of the G. P. U., the Soviets' political police. Several other equally important or more important considerations induced the party congress to decide on the G. P. U.'s abolition: economic improvements have undermined domestic political opposition; the war danger is diminished; wrecking activities by disloyal engineers have shrunk to a minimum: the G. P. U. made many mistakes in dealing with these activities. On account of its officials' ubiquity and efficiency and because of its broad and scarcely controlled prerogatives, the G. P. U. was the only body in the Soviet Union which had sources of power within itself instead of, as is the case of all other organizations, enjoying influence lent it by the Communist Party. This situation could no longer be tolerated. Moreover, more normal political conditions have stimulated a demand for an administration of justice which might have been called Western a few years ago but which some Western countries have now abandoned. When the G. P. U. is finally abolished—the date has been postponed several times for unexplained reasons—the public courts will be granted added power and will hear more cases. Akulov, the Soviet Union's Attorney-General, has been urging this change for the last three years, and Stalin has supported him. At a conference of state prosecutors and court officials a few days ago, Akulov declared that "the organ of Soviet justice must not only annihilate and suppress the opposition of the class enemy"—this is what the G. P. U. limits its efforts to —but must also, he added, "exert an educational influence on unstable elements among the laboring population." And that could best be done by the courts.

The thought of tampering with the G. P. U. would never have occurred to anyone had not Russia's domestic and foreign situation undergone a marked change for the better. Soviet citizens today have a highly developed consciousness of their country's strength and its potentialities for scientific and economic achievement. The valiant rescue of the Cheliuskin crew from the fragile ice floe in the Arctic stirred the entire nation as no industrial triumph in years. Millions thrilled to the idea that Soviet airmen displayed such a tremendous capacity for heroism and daring. The records established by the two Russian stratosphere balloons were likewise interpreted as tributes to Soviet science, the excellence of Soviet equipment, and the fine human qualities of the new Soviet individual. The Bolsheviks are really convinced that their system will enable the nation to reach heights of culture, technique, and material well-being never even dreamed of in the West. Some will call this an illusion; others an exaggerated national superiority complex. Communists, however, argue that their unique approach to life taps hitherto unsuspected sources of intellectual and moral strength. In any event, the intensive inculcation of the belief that "there are no fortresses," as Stalin has said, "which the Bolsheviks cannot take," is an important political reality.

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Mr. Anderson's Last Stand

By PAUL Y. ANDERSON

Washington, June 2

THE Washington gossips are muttering among themselves that Mr. Roosevelt is softening up. A few days ago a former Albany correspondent remarked, "I'm afraid he is *going Governor* on us." To be perfectly candid, some of his recent actions may reasonably be cited in support of the theory that he has become cautious. Nevertheless, I have excellent grounds for rejecting this theory. The President's chief concern at this time is to get Congress out of town. He is likely to succeed, because most of the boys are anxious to get back and repair their fences. When that happens, certain financial and industrial interests which recently have been emboldened to assume attitudes of defiance may learn that they have sadly misapprehended the President's temper. I apprehend that they will presently find themselves dealing with a tough baby. A very tough baby. We now have, as I have heretofore noted, a dictatorship by common consent, and I anticipate that its powers are about to be exercised to the fullest extent. No doubt that event will bring grief to the breast of the Honorable James M. Beck, who represents Bill Vare, the big Philadelphia garbage man, in the House of Representatives, but it may also bring food to the stomachs of hungry millions—which, after all, probably is of more importance. The manner in which the steel code was revised should be enough to tell the judicious in what quarter the wind lies. Price-fixing has been prohibited, the uniform eight-hour day has been established (the end of the long, long trail), General Johnson has been empowered to veto any act of the Steel Code Authority, and minimum wage scales have been extended to piece workers. The Federal Trade Commission recently uttered several criticisms of the steel code, some of which appeared to be thoroughly warranted. With characteristic humor Roosevelt has now assigned the commission to the task of conducting a six months' survey of conditions in the industry and recommending improvements in the code. They asked for it; let us hope they do a good job.

* * * * *

JUST the same, we are in for plenty of trouble. It is not merely the Toledo situation—although I consider that situation to be highly significant. As I write, the steel workers' union is headed toward a strike which, if it occurs, will undoubtedly be attended by shocking acts of violence, and will almost certainly end in a complete defeat for the union. In the first place, less than one-fourth of the workers in the industry are organized. For a strike to be effective the union needs not less than a majority. In the second place, the committee representing the union made the mistake of presenting their demand for recognition to the Iron and Steel Institute instead of the individual employers. The institute, of course, is under no legal obligation to engage in collective bargaining with anyone, while the employers are. The committee is the victim of its own inexperience. It is trying to organize the industry by means of a strike, and it hasn't, in my judgment, one chance in a hundred. The outlook is more favorable for the textile workers. Additional strikes in the automobile plants seem almost inevitable unless a change is made in the terms of the compromise settlement which was reached here a few weeks ago. I shall not be surprised if the automobile magnates are afforded an opportunity to make good on the bold language which some of them employed during their recent conference with the President. They might do well to remember that the United States Army contains several officers thoroughly schooled in industry and fully capable of operating their plants. Indeed, I suspect some of them could operate them better. Certainly they could do it more humanely.

* * * * *

ANY Senator has a perfect right to oppose any official act, agency, or government official, and he has a perfect right to state the reasons for his opposition. But no Senator has the right to utter untruths on the floor of the Senate, and that is exactly what the Honorable Gerald P. Nye, of North Dakota, did last week in his speech attacking General Johnson and the NRA. Imagine a Senator or anyone else publicly declaring that while Johnson has made mistakes, he refuses to admit them! As millions of radio listeners know, Johnson has made it a fixed policy, carried out in literally dozens of speeches, to admit that he has made mistakes and expects to make more. He has merely contended that they were honest ones, and were corrected when discovered. Imagine a Senator declaring in one breath that the NRA is driving "little men" to the wall by permitting prices to be fixed at such a low level that they must sell at a loss, and asserting in the next that consumers are being robbed by high prices! Imagine the same Senator posing as a champion of labor one day, and the next day espousing the cause of the little chiseler who wishes to pay less than $12 for a forty-eight-hour work week! The fact is that probably the biggest mistake Johnson ever made, and the only one, so far as I know, that he has failed publicly to admit, was when he relied on the good faith of Gerald P. Nye. Well, he knows better now.

* * * * *

THE farcical episode of the Darrow report achieved new heights of comedy last week when Chairman Darrow and another member of the board voluntarily appeared at Johnson's office and begged for an opportunity to "cooperate" with him, and when Sidney Hillman of the garment workers' union shook his finger under the nose of another member and charged him with being "the worst sweatshop operator in the United States." Of the two who went so belatedly to Johnson's office in search of "cooperation," the venerable chairman was received with courtesy and kindness, because he is old and he is feeble. But the other man is not, and during the short time which he remained—it was very short—he heard some language from which I suspect his eardrums are still smarting. He had it coming. The whole business has turned into an extremely sour joke.

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THIS will be my last regular contribution to *The Nation*. The explanation is simple enough. For reasons which they deem sufficient, my employers, the editors and publishers of the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*, have entered an order to cease and desist. The reasoning by which this decision was reached was, in my opinion, faulty, and based largely on misapprehension. Nevertheless, they were acting strictly within their rights. It will be whispered that interests which I have treated none too tenderly here have finally succeeded in getting my scalp. Indeed, I can already hear the chuckles of the publishers' lobby. Don't believe a word of it. The objections which prompted this decision have been a subject of discussion among us for years, and I have been permitted to continue this long solely because of the paper's consideration for my feelings. The *Post-Dispatch* cannot be "reached"—I have seen that tried often enough to know. As a matter of fact, common honesty forces me to confess that over a period of twenty years (come June 14) no reporter in America has had better treatment from his employers. I have been allowed to work pretty much as and when I chose, and have been the beneficiary of innumerable acts of kindness. Of the editors of *The Nation*, I need only point out that I probably have been permitted more freedom of expression than any political writer in active practice. We have not always agreed, but they have let me have my say. One cannot reasonably ask for more. To the readers of *The Nation* I should like to say the following: Through the years in which my diffident observations on men and affairs have appeared in this place, I have received thousands of letters from men and women in every State in the Union and several countries in Europe, and 95 per cent have been friendly. I have not been able to answer all or even a majority of them, but I shall treasure the sentiments they expressed for the rest of my life—and I am hardly a sentimental man. I suspect that my best was none too good, but you have been pretty swell about it, and I shall miss you. We may never meet again in *The Nation*, but rest assured, ultimately we shall all be reunited in hell. So long, and good luck.

Impressions of Italy

By ROBERT DELL

Geneva, May 3

I CAME back to Geneva three weeks ago after shivering for six weeks on the Italian Riviera. As I went there to work, the fact that there were not more than six fine days in the whole time was less serious than it would have been had I gone merely to bask in a sun that declined to show itself except on rare occasions.

The return journey from Genoa to Geneva, via Modane, did not give me a favorable idea of the efficiency of Fascist organization. The favorite claim of Mussolini's admirers is that the Fascist regime has made the trains punctual in Italy. For all I know, the claim may be justified, and it should not have been very difficult to make the trains punctual, for most of them are so slow that there is plenty of margin to make up for lost time. A *rapide* takes nearly three hours to cover the distance between Genoa and Turin—104 miles—and an ordinary "express" about four hours. What the slow trains take, God and Mussolini know. And in other respects the management of the Italian railways leaves much to be desired. I left Genoa by the Rome-Paris *rapide* at 9:20 p.m. on April 8, the Sunday after Easter. When the train arrived at Genoa, where a large number of people were waiting to take it, it had only one through carriage to Modane and Paris, containing four first-class and four second-class compartments. It was quite impossible to enter it, for people were packed closely together in the vestibules and corridor, and when the door of the carriage was opened, some of them nearly fell out. The only thing to do was to get into a carriage going only as far as Turin. At Turin a crowd of passengers for France—they seemed to me to number about 200—were bundled out on to the platform in pouring rain at about half an hour after midnight. More through carriages to Paris were added—two, I think, but in any case they were inadequate to provide for all the passengers. All the way from Turin to Culoz, where I got off the train, I spent the night in the corridor, which was full of people. There were men lying in the luggage racks in the compartments. I have never seen anything like it on a railway journey since the war, when there was some excuse for overcrowded trains. There was no excuse on this occasion. Rome and the Italian Riviera had been full of foreign visitors for the Easter holidays, and any competent railway administration would have made provision for an influx of travelers to Modane and Paris at the end of Easter week.

Of the foreign visitors to the Riviera east of Genoa in the Easter holidays about 90 per cent, I should say, were Germans. At Rapallo on Easter Day one heard more German spoken than Italian, and heard hardly any other foreign language. All the hotels were full—there was not a room to be had—so the number of German visitors must have been large. Many of them looked like people in quite modest circumstances and their respective accents showed that they came from every part of Germany. I counted, however, more than twenty German cars in two or three minutes against half a dozen from all other foreign countries. In view of Dr. Schacht's plea of poverty as an excuse for not paying the creditors of Germany, this is really rather surprising. It is a fact that the financial and economic conditions in Germany are very bad, but the proletariat are the chief victims of the Nazi regime. The condition of the German workmen is worse than it has been in the last fifty years. Their average real wage last October was 35 per cent lower than in 1913 and 31 per cent lower than in 1900, and it is certainly not higher now—rather the contrary. A Zurich paper said a few days ago that a German firm on the Swiss frontier was paying its German workmen four marks a week, from which one mark was deducted for income tax and various other contributions. This seems almost incredible, but wages in Germany are wretchedly low and the income tax and other deductions made by the state are about 30 per cent of the nominal wage, at any rate when the weekly wage is as much as fifty marks. The German in-

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vasion of the Italian Riviera, however, shows that there must be middle-class—and even lower-middle-class—Germans with money to spend on foreign trips. And prices in Italy are considerably higher than in Germany.

The Nazi government is spending enormous sums on propaganda abroad, at the expense of the creditors of Germany. Can it be that Goebbels is subsidizing foreign travel for propaganda purposes? It seems hardly likely, but German agents swarm in Italy as elsewhere. A German woman went into a book and newspaper shop in Nervi one day in March to buy a German newspaper. The shop was full of Nazi publications and portraits of Hitler and other eminent Nazis. To the surprise of the customer she was served by a German girl, who told her that she had been in Nervi for a couple of months and that the shop belonged to her brother. The customer—not quite sincerely—admired the portraits of Hitler and asked the shop girl whether business was good. The girl said that it was satisfactory, and then the customer asked: "Are you doing good work for Hitler?" "Oh, yes," was the proud but somewhat incautious reply, "that is what we are here for."

Rather to my surprise I found feeling in that part of Italy not very favorable to Nazi Germany. Naturally German money was welcome, but the spenders of it were less so. Nothing annoyed the Italians more than to be told that Hitlerism and fascism were identical. They always replied that the resemblances were quite superficial. They said that Hitler was crazy, as perhaps in a sense he is—he is certainly a mystical fanatic. But there is more resemblance than Italians like to admit between the Nazi and Fascist regimes. It is true that the resemblances are mostly in methods. The principles and doctrines of the Nazi religion are peculiar to itself, especially its fundamental dogma of "racism" with its consequent anti-Semitism. Anti-Semitism is not peculiar to Hitlerism, but its "racist" basis is. Hitler appears to have got it from Georg Schönerer. There is no anti-Semitism in Italy nor is it a conscious aim of fascism to return to the Dark Ages. "Hitler is Widukind's revenge," said Alfred Rosenberg recently—and Widukind was defeated by Charlemagne in 785. Fascism, however, has killed intellectual life in Italy as Hitlerism is killing it in Germany. There can be no real intellectual life without liberty. There is in Italy the same feeling as in Germany of being surrounded by spies—it is less oppressive, however, in Genoa than in Rome—the same stifling moral atmosphere, the same repression of individuality, the same passion for histrionic stunts, the same organized humbug. While I was on the Riviera, there was the grotesque general election in which 97 per cent of the electors on the register were alleged to have voted. Before it was held, the walls were covered with placards declaring that abstention would be treason. As a rule one sees few black shirts in that part of Italy except those worn by the Fascist militia, but on the election day every member of the party wore a black shirt by order.

The Italian and the German press are as alike as two peas. In both countries the newspapers are mere propaganda sheets. In Rome official instructions are given to the press daily. The editors are told what subjects they must deal with, about what space is to be given to each subject, and which are to be put on the front page. The Italian papers, like the German, give little real news and are filled up with long reports of speeches by eminent politicians, glorifications of the regime, and other pure propaganda. Italians do not know what is going on in their own country, still less in the rest of the world. The *Corriere della Sera,* for example, which formerly had one of the best foreign news services in Europe, has now a miserable service. It publishes, of course, only what the authorities allow it to publish and its news is usually tendentious. When I was in Italy it printed several columns every day from its Paris correspondent about the Stavisky scandal for the purpose of injuring the reputation of France and inflaming Italian opinion against that country. The correspondent repeated as gospel every bit of gossip or scandal published in the *Action Française* or in the weekly scandal papers, however unfounded, and quoted Léon Daudet on every possible occasion. His messages were misleading and often libelous. In Germany people are ceasing to read the papers. In Italy anybody in business or practicing a profession or in any position at all prominent is obliged to take a paper or be suspect, but Italians do not conceal their contempt for their press.

On the Riviera there is less outward manifestation of Fascist enthusiasm than in Rome. One does not, as in Rome, see several times a day bands of young Fascists marching along the streets singing hymns to the blessed dagger and the glorious machine-gun. In general one is less bored by fascism. Rome, in my opinion, is now intolerable. It combines intellectual deadness with noisy vulgarity. In Genoa the economic crisis is severe and its consequences are obvious. The port is half-deserted, trade is at a standstill, and there are bitter complaints on all sides. The number of unemployed is very large—how large it is impossible to say, as the official figures bear no relation to facts—and wages and salaries are miserably low. Genoa was formerly a wealthy town and no doubt still is, relatively to Italy as a whole, but there are evidences that all classes are suffering from the crisis. I had not been in Genoa for twelve years and I found a great difference. The town is much less lively and much less money is spent. The best restaurant and the only really large cafe in the town have failed and are closed, and the restaurants and cafes remaining are half empty except on Sundays. The economic conditions in Italy may be no worse than in Germany—perhaps they are not as bad—but I have been in no town in Germany where the external signs of the depression were so marked as they are in Genoa.

There is widespread and increasing discontent, and I found people more ready to voice their grievances than on any previous visit to Italy since Mussolini gained power. No doubt they spoke more candidly to a foreigner than they would have spoken to a fellow-countryman. If workmen are not discontented, they are easily pleased, for wages are, I believe, even lower than in Germany and the cost of living is higher. Moreover, as in Germany, they are deprived of the right to organize themselves independently to improve their condition. The strongest expressions of discontent that I heard, however, came from the commercial classes. They complain that the government is recklessly extravagant—that, for example, it spends enormous sums on embellishing Rome although there is already a huge budget deficit—that taxation is oppressive, and that it is almost impossible for most people in trade or commerce to make both ends meet. The Italian deficit is larger than the French, about which so much fuss has been made, and it is difficult to understand how the state manages to pay its way. It man-

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ages it partly by forced internal loans, or loans that are forced in everything but name—another cause of discontent.

If this particular district is at all representative of Italy as a whole—and that is a point on which I can express no opinion—I should say that whereas Mussolini still has a strong personal hold, although less strong than formerly, the regime is not popular. People put up with the regime for the sake of Mussolini. How long will they do that? Already Mussolini is trying to divert the attention of the Italian public from his failure in internal affairs by desperate efforts to win prestige by a success in foreign affairs, but hitherto his efforts have been far from successful. His Balkan policy has proved a catastrophic failure, and it is by no means certain that his Austrian policy will succeed. He does not know whether to come to terms with Hitler about Austria or to break with him, and some day he will have to choose. Indeed, Mussolini has no definite line in foreign policy. He turns feverishly from one experiment to another.

I returned from a visit to Rome rather more than a year ago with the impression that the disappearance of Mussolini would probably mean the end of the Fascist regime, and that impression has been strengthened by my recent visit. The Nazi regime would survive the death of Hitler, because Hitlerism is a religion and when Hitler ceases to be a demi-god on earth he will become a god in heaven. Fascism is a camouflage for a dictatorship on traditional Italian lines without definite doctrines or principles. The "corporative state" and the rest of it were after-thoughts. Mussolini is fascism and the regime is a one-man show. Hitler is not afraid of assassination. Mussolini lives in terror of it. He wears a coat of mail under his clothes, and when it is announced that the Duce is about to leave the Palazzo Venezia by a particular gate, a car with somebody else in it comes out rapidly by the gate mentioned and Mussolini's car leaves by another. The chances are that Mussolini will be assassinated some day. If he is, his assassin will be a man in a black shirt.

San Francisco's Labor War

By EVELYN SEELEY

San Francisco, May 29

DOWN on the waterfront they say, "The strike is over and the war's begun." Dean H. F. Grady, chairman of the President's mediation board in the International Longshoremen's strike, said, "We have a revolution on our hands."

The biggest and most solid strike the West Coast has ever known after continuing nineteen days came to a crisis Monday, May 28, in violence and a "peace pact." The violence consisted of long and bloody riots in which scores of heads were cracked, one man was seriously wounded when police fired into the picket lines, and seven men were packed off to the hospital. The "peace pact," known by the strikers as "boloney" but regarded by the San Francisco *Examiner* as a settlement, dodged the strike demands. It had already been rejected in a coast-wide referendum by the rank and file of the Pacific Northwest and stood to be rejected in the San Francisco balloting. San Pedro, the harbor of Los Angeles, was expected to regard the peace pact more favorably, since its shipping is dominated by the militant open-shop policy of the city.

The strikers demand the closed shop, control of their own hiring halls, and fifteen cents more an hour. They were offered "full recognition of the union without closed-shop provisions," joint control of the hiring halls with the employers, and arbitration for wages and conditions. The closed shop is the big demand and the big obstacle. It is believed that while San Francisco ship-owners might agree reluctantly to the closed shop and Portland and Seattle might come in, Los Angeles would never agree. Joseph Ryan, president of the International Longshoremen's Association, has been quoted as saying, "We don't care a whoop for a closed-shop agreement," but San Francisco, the storm center of the strike, has repudiated his remark and holds out militantly for the closed shop. The settlement must be voted on by the whole rank and file of the striking body.

The strike began technically on March 23, although President Roosevelt halted it on March 22 for an investigation; it became active on May 9 after the fact-finding committee produced nothing. The suggested settlements, in which all the leading capitalists and chambers of commerce and 11,400 marine workers are concerned, have grown less and less favorable to the workers in spite of the efforts of Edward F. McGrady, Assistant Secretary of Labor, and President Ryan.

This is not "just another strike." It is virtually a general strike. Of the 11,400 longshoremen and marine workers striking along the coast, 3,800 are longshoremen in the San Francisco Bay region; 1,700 are members of the International Seamen's Union and the Marine Workers' Industrial Union; 1,200 are marine cooks and stewards; 3,500 are marine firemen and water tenders; 600 are masters, mates, and pilots; 300 belong to the Independent Union of Officers and Engineers, No. 9; 1,700 are members of the Marine Engineers' Benevolent Association. And it is the coast teamsters and marine-transport workers, an active group that grew out of the old I. W. W., who by their sympathetic strike on all dock work have enabled these groups to put it over.

Sixty-one ships heavy with cargo lie idle in San Francisco harbor, 500 scabs work furtively under Pinkerton protection, and 500 police patrol the waterfront. In Portland and Seattle the scabs were scared so thoroughly that the harbors have been locked up tight from the beginning. In Portland one day twenty-five would-be strike-breakers were thrown into the Willamette River. In Seattle a Japanese silk ship, ready to unload its valuable silk cargo before it discharged its passengers, to load it on the special fast train that waited, and thus to bolster up the wavering silk exchange, stood in the harbor ten days and finally returned home with its silk. San Pedro, because of its open-shop domination and its physically decentralized character, has managed a little unloading and given the northbound railroads and trucks a little business.

San Francisco is the place where strike tactics are de-

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termined. Scores of heads are bloody since the riots of last Monday, but so far not one is bowed. The mediators may be exhausted, the ship-owners desperate, the Chamber of Commerce threatening to open the port by some mysterious means, but the strikers are still rarin' to go.

It is a different strike from any the Coast has ever known. No other strike has ever tied up the entire coast, no other has achieved a united front of waterfront workers. Until May 28 it was a peaceful strike, except for the strike-breaker damage, and not a gun was pulled. There were no armed guards, and employers were reported to have urged some Pinkerton guards to sign waivers against potential personal injury. Strikers were repeatedly ordered by their leaders to avoid all violence. Until the crucial Monday, when one longshoreman found a battered bugle and another played it at the head of the daily parade, ending this time in bloodshed, there was almost a holiday spirit among the strikers.

It is an amazingly popular strike, and even the usual labor-baiting newspapers have held their peace. Relief has poured into the chest of the strike committee and the Workers' International Relief, and lately 1,600 longshoremen have been fed daily at the soup kitchen. The Community Chest has fed strikers' families. College boys and professors have sent clothes.

In spite of the fact that Ryan stated on May 29 in Seattle that the San Francisco strike was led by Communists, the usual "red scare" has made no headway. It was not a Communist-impelled strike and the Communists have picketed side by side with old A. F. of L. members, have led relief and legal defense, and have been cracked on the head by the "sappers" indiscriminately.

"It's because it's a militant strike that we've been successful so far," said Harry Bridges, a lanky Australian stevedore, the veteran of four strikes and an outstanding strike tactician. "They can call them radical tactics but whatever they are they work. You get nowhere at all with the good old legal tactics, all this reliance on arbitration, injunctions, letting the scabs work, and so forth. You've got to do it this way—start right in with mass picketing and relief, and hold the respect of the men by doing things and not just sitting around waiting."

The West Coast has always been strong for its longshoremen. And the longshoremen have been proud of themselves. They take great pride in their trade; many of them have followed it for twenty or thirty years and made it a life work. San Francisco longshoremen are famous for moving ships faster than they can be moved elsewhere and for the least breakage, and thus have helped to bring shipping to this port. Recently, however, the longshoremen's profession—like many another—has declined from its heights. Working conditions have become so bad that the strikers feel they have nothing to lose. There have been a few men, getting preference, who have made $75 a week. But the rank and file have averaged $10 a week and less. Hiring halls have been manipulated by labor contractors who bargained with the men for employment commissions. The average longshoreman has come down to the docks daily at 6 a.m. and has stood around until noon to learn he could wait around until 10 at night for a few hours' work.

There has been no union except the Blue Book (company) union that resulted from the bloody San Francisco strike of 1919. The present International Longshoremen's Association is only eleven months old, the fastest-growing union in labor history. The NRA, they say, helped them to some extent at first, but since then it has not been able to enforce its own rules. The repeated attempts by employers to knife the new union, with the increasingly bad conditions, brought about the decision to strike on March 23.

From the beginning the union's healthy distrust of officials in general and its rule that all settlement proposals must be submitted to the rank and file for a vote have kept the strike going. The referendum rule has also caused a lot of red tape in forcing a vote on all proposals, good or bad. Local autonomy is so strong that even the international president is looked upon with a skeptical eye. Strike-breaking has done nobody any good, though there have been recruiting at the University of California by Bill Ingram, the football coach, and offers of $15 a day to fraternity scabs by Herbert Fleishhacker, Jr., son of the banker who controls the Dollar Line. President Sproule of the University of California quickly checked Ingram's activities, but the university is still known to longshoremen as a "scab incubator." The National Students' League made a fuss. A Stanford student published a letter that echoed through the campus saying, "Scab is a dirty word, like spit." San Mateo College had a huge protest meeting.

Scabs live furtively on the "hotel ship" Diana Dollar, and quit in hordes because of fear and uncomfortable conditions and pay that doesn't equal promises because there isn't work enough. Ambulances bringing them in were attacked by strikers, and a doctor treating them was threatened. Suspicious-looking individuals wandering on the waterfront are questioned about their destination, and if they say they are taking a ferry, a picket sees that they take it.

Many of the 500 police who patrol the waterfront used to be longshoremen themselves and until the strike grew bad were good friends with the strikers. But that is over now. In the first place the cops are fighting tired, having been kept working in twelve-hour shifts with no days off. After last Monday's violence Lieutenant Joseph Mignola, in command of the police who did the shooting, said, "Next time we won't dust 'em off, we'll put some of them in the morgue."

The strikers, who picket 1,000 at a time and in twelve-hour shifts like the police, have been banished now to the town side of the Embarcadero. It looks like a movie set for a panoramic war. The Embarcadero is a wide impressive street stretching out in an arc from both sides of the Ferry Building. It is modern and suave on the harbor side, for most San Francisco commuters and visitors enter here. The wide walk in front of the white stone piers, formerly hilarious with unloading or with sailing farewells, is silent these nights. Farewell parties for the few sailings must do their cocktail drinking in the street, if at all; visitors cannot pass, and only a few round-the-world passengers are seen. Ferry commuters sneak along unobtrusively. Police are everywhere; their motor cycles or armored cars lined up in imposing squadrons. Mounted police gallop up and down.

The pickets' patrol cars look comparatively shabby on their side of the street. The longshoremen stand in groups on the other side of the tracks, leaning against old buildings or old rusty iron boilers or battered ship parts. One weather-beaten fellow has binoculars at his eyes. He's "spyin'

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around," he says, watching to see if any of those ships that crowd the harbor so strangely are "taking exercise." He is watching for scabs, taking a good look at any he finds so he will know them next time. Farther back from the piers the tattoo parlors, pool halls, movie halls, and even the beer joints are practically deserted. But business is heavy at the soup kitchen.

The strikers, a hearty lot, bear out the longshoreman tradition; are huge, husky, usually blue-eyed men. They look defiantly out at the bay and the East Bay diadem of lights that rims it. Within that frame it is strange to see nothing move but ferry boats and to hear no steamer whistles and no workmen's shouts. That Japanese ship, full of scrap iron to be made into munitions, cannot move until they say so; nor can any others of the sixty-one out there at anchor.

[*When it became apparent in the course of the balloting that both the seamen and the longshoremen would reject the proposed settlement which Miss Seeley describes, the plan was suddenly withdrawn. Mr. McGrady has returned to Washington to obtain, if possible, the government's approval of a plan by which hiring halls would be operated by government officials in association with representatives of both the ship-owners and the union, the cost to be shared equally by the three. But even if the government consents to this scheme, neither the ship-owners nor the longshoremen are likely to do so.*—Editors The Nation.]

In the Driftway

THE Drifter is not much of a collector except of such commodities as could not possibly be profitable. He once had an elegant collection of rattlesnake rattles with which he used to impress maiden aunts, but there is probably something in his chemistry that would have kept him from cherishing the South American stamp which was recently adjudged worth $50,000—enough to keep a Drifter away from home forever. And at the moment he has a collection even more worthless, practically speaking, than rattlesnake rattles. It consists of miscellaneous letters and press releases from publishers that he has managed to salvage from that most important piece of office furniture—the wastebasket.

* * * * *

PUBLISHERS are among the most fascinating specimens of the genus *Homo,* and their variety is endless. There is, for instance, the effusive type who is convinced that every book he publishes is the best of its kind ever printed and who launches each precious volume with a personal letter to the literary editors of the world in which he proclaims his conviction with generous abandon. He has obviously never stopped to consider the confusion which must arise in the breast of an editor who receives three such letters in one day, and the Drifter would be the last to suggest that such generous impulses be curbed. But a recent letter has the Drifter worried. The writer calls the book in question to the "very, very best attention" of the editor. When the very has lost its flavor wherewith shall it be very-ed? And will not this promising young publisher eventually have to change his name and begin all over again?

FOR contrast there is the Milquetoast among publishers who goes in for deference and understatement. "My dear Mr. ——," he writes, "I am sending you a copy of ——'s latest novel. I have a feeling that —— can write." The letters of this particular publisher have lately become so full of reservations and therefore so long that they can scarcely be read at one sitting. "It is hardly reasonable," one of them begins, "to believe that you will share my enthusiasm for ——"; by the third paragraph the qualifications have become embarrassing. "You will probably complain that this book is not new and you will be perfectly right. . . ."

* * * * *

HERE is a blurb for a book just out which should obviously have been issued in the middle of a long intellectual winter:

> How America may work out an economic system which shall provide an adequate and comfortable living for all its citizenry is *only one* of the absorbing problems in this book. [Italics ours.]

Releases often contain news of a rather bizarre nature such as that "Booksellers of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, are stocking heavily on 'Long Remember' for a big day of cash sales on May 30," or that two of the leading fiction titles on the list of books which Uncle Sam is buying for the boys in the Civilian Conservation Corps are "A Nest of Simple Folk" by Sean O'Faolain and "After Such Pleasures" by Dorothy Parker! But the publisher's nose for news is perhaps best illustrated by the following release which for the Drifter sheds an entirely new light on the nature of coincidence:

> By one of those rare coincidences in publishing, "Lightship," a novel by Archie Binns, was sent to press . . . a day before the White Star Liner Olympic crashed into the Nantucket lightship. . . . "Lightship" is the story of the men aboard a lightship off a reef on the Pacific Coast. . . . It will be published in August.

The Drifter

Correspondence

Arthur Warner

To the Editors of The Nation:

I want to say that I feel that the death of Arthur Warner is a great loss to *The Nation's* readers and friends. In my mind Arthur Warner represented personally, in the fullest way, the combination of honesty and noble antagonism to all forms of oppression and persecution associated with the name of *The Nation* and the liberal way of life.

Nowadays when so many radicals escape into cynicism or meet reaction with whining irresponsibility, there is something especially clean about cheerful integrity like Warner's. It leaves a glow with you, a sense of well-being. Working with him, or talking to him, or even seeing his name in print, I felt a kind of guaranty that here was a firm, pleasant, unassuming, and deeply sincere friend of humanity.

That quality has attached itself to many philosophies and expressed itself in many ways. These days one sees men and women who fight for it getting their heads cracked, being jailed, persecuted, slandered. I think Warner always recognized that this was his fight, too, tactical differences notwithstanding; since

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defeat of the workers' side implies sure death to the cultural values upon which honest writers and intellectuals build their lives.

Warner never dodged issues; he was never afraid of taking sides. He was a good writer and an honest one. The fight against exploitation, destruction, and savagery has lost a valuable friend.

New York, May 27 ANITA BRENNER

"The People's Choice"

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

In three respects your references to Agar's "The People's Choice" in the editorial Who Gives the Pulitzer Prizes? in *The Nation* for May 23 depart from accuracy.

You say that the book is *"by common consent,* mediocre or worse." On the contrary, "The People's Choice" was commended not only by most newspaper reviewers but also in such magazines as the *New Republic* (January 24), the *American Historical Review* (April, 1934), and especially the *American Review* of December, 1933, in which Allen Tate called it "the most remarkable popular history that has been written on America."

You say: "The best that the New York *Times* reviewer could find to say was 'Reserving the right to disagree with many of the author's undocumented conclusions, "The People's Choice" will repay the time spent in reading it.'" This gives the impression that the review was unfavorable, whereas actually it was a full-page indorsement of "The People's Choice" as a book of lasting value.

You say that the book expresses a point of view "which even many conservatives would regard as stupidly reactionary." Can a book which has big business for its villain be so described?

Boston, May 21 R. N. LINSCOTT

"On Our Way"

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

I think most replies to critics are a little absurd, but I should like the gentleman who wrote the review of "On Our Way"—in *The Nation* for May 23—to see this, and perhaps it might be of interest to your readers as well. This review says: ". . . difficult as it is to believe that he [the President] wrote any part of it ["On Our Way"] other than the foreword and brief last chapter . . ." The facts are that the President wrote the entire book. I have definite knowledge of this for the reason that I witnessed the dictation of the greater part of it.

New York, May 22 CRITCHELL REMINGTON

In Defense of Major Douglas

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

It would be very strange if a professor of banking discovered any good in Major Douglas's writings. A condition of holding such a post is strict financial orthodoxy. The condition is not insisted on; one simply does not become a professor of banking unless one is orthodox. But to do the breed justice, many of them would have prepared themselves more conscientiously for writing on Douglas than Professor Beckhart appears to have done in his review of "Social Credit" (*The Nation,* May 16). He complains, for example, that Douglas does not define clearly the terms cost and price. This is to neglect the early technical works of Douglas. For a starter, let Professor Beckhart ponder on this statement: "Cost is *the accumulation of past spendings over an indefinite period,* whereas cash price requires a purchasing power effective at the moment of purchase." As for the charge of anti-Semitism, to which Professor Beckhart stoops in what should be a discussion free from prejudice, there is not a grain of truth in it.

New York, May 11 GORHAM MUNSON

A Call Against Arms!

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

A stirring call for an International Women's Congress Against War and Fascism to be held in Paris July 28 to 30—the date which marks the twentieth anniversary of the outbreak of the most tragic war in all history—has been received by the American League Against War and Fascism, signed by many well-known European women. It is a summons to women from all walks of life to unite on this common plank of struggle against war and fascism. Women from the farm, the mill, the shop; women who work in the professions and arts; women from the home—they will be united in an impressive American delegation to go to Paris and make their protest heard. Their plans for this struggle will be international in scope.

Any sum that readers of *The Nation* can spare will be a telling contribution toward the carrying on of this great purpose.

New York, April 30 WINIFRED CHAPPELL, Treasurer

F. Hopkinson Smith

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

I am preparing the official biography of F. Hopkinson Smith. Will all persons who have any information concerning his career—engineering, artistic, literary, or personal—please communicate with me at the University of Richmond.

Richmond, Va., April 4 CAROLINE S. LUTZ

Fascism and England

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

To a man who happens to have been bred and born an Englishman, and who could not get away from the fact, try as he might, the controversy begun by Mr. Steel in *The Nation* for April 4 concerning whether England will go fascist is highly interesting.

If public ideas outside of England are going to be based on what the Mosleyites and Rothermeres are saying and doing in England, that foreign opinion is going to stray far from the truth. While your Englishman is naturally a European, and belongs to Europe, he is also something apart. The whole of the European continent might be giving obeisances and the Roman salute to the dictators of the various countries, but, just as absolute monarchy has been gradually but surely shorn of its divine right since the execution of Charles I, so is it impossible for any one man to bring the English people under the iron heel of fascism.

Fascism is nothing less than the feudal system showing its head again. Does any intelligent foreign observer think for a single moment that the bitterly fought-for liberties which are the foundation of the untrammeled and constitutional government of England at present, liberties which are ingrained in the

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people, are going to be sacrificed, as it were, overnight? Magna Charta, which was wrung from King John, undoubtedly was the genesis of English constitutional and political freedom, and when the fascist minority in England ransacks the British Museum in order to find and destroy that document, then, and then only, will I attach any importance to its escapades.

Any shade of fascism is impossible in England. I am English and I know.

New York, April 25 H. SPENCER, JR.

The Intelligent Traveler

European Summer Schools

EUROPEAN summer schools are organized primarily for the study of the language of a given country with courses in general culture given in addition. They do not repeat the curriculum of the academic year in tabloid form, as American summer schools usually do. Arrangements for credit in an American university for summer work done abroad are often difficult on this account. If credit is an object, such arrangements should always be made in advance with one's own university. In planning a summer course one should remember that in general at least six weeks must be spent in residence before an American university will recognize the work for credit.

The following opportunities for summer study in England, France, and Germany are a selection of those which seem most valuable for Americans. The Institute of International Education, 2 West Forty-fifth Street, New York, is headquarters for fuller information on other schools, detailed curricula, costs, and academic requirements. Rates given below are figured on the exchange of February 3, 1934.

ENGLAND

Since English summer schools stress courses in the English language, they attract more Continentals than Americans. However, the courses are diverse, and emphasis on methods of teaching makes them valuable to those who teach their mother tongue to foreigners.

University of London, July 20–August 16. Faculty includes Somerset Maugham and Barrie. Courses are offered in history of London, phonetics, economics, education. Fee, $27.94; board and room about $14.27 a week.

City of London Vacation Course in Education, July 27–August 10. Courses include English literature, modern methods of teaching in England, and the like. Fee $4.15 per course; accommodations from $15 up.

Polytechnic School of Languages, London, July 30–August 24. Special courses for teachers. Fee for full course $21.79. Living expenses in boarding-houses about $21 a week.

Of wider interest for Americans are the excellent schools of the drama, some of them connected with or visiting the important drama festivals. The following offer worth-while opportunities:

School of Dramatic Production at Bath, July 28–August 11 and August 14–August 28. Courses in all branches of dramatic art, and production of several plays, with the giving of a final London performance at the famous Everyman Theater. Fee $15; board and lodging in the Residence House $15 a week.

Cambridge Summer Meeting, University of Cambridge, July 26–August 2. Lectures on Masterpieces of Drama and the Modern Theater. Illustrations will be afforded by university dramatic societies and by visits to the Festival Theater. Fee $10.89; board and lodging in university halls $14.27 a week.

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Central School of Speech Training and Dramatic Art, University of London. This is the foremost dramatic school in England. Fee $55 for the six weeks' course, which may also be split into two-week periods. An American group conducted by Blanche Yurka will spend two weeks at the school, a week at Oxford at the Verse-speaking Contest, a week at the Malvern Festival, and two weeks at the Shakespeare festival. The inclusive rate New York back to New York is $597. Address the Drama League Travel Bureau, Hotel Barbizon Plaza, New York.

English-Scandinavian Summer School of Physical Education at Sturry, Kent, August 1–August 18. Curriculum includes Swedish gymnastics, swimming, sports, folk dances. Tuition and living expenses for a total of $51.90.

France

University of Paris (Sorbonne), July 1–October 31. A comprehensive list of courses is offered in language, French civilization, literature, history, phonetics, art and archaeology, and so on. Tuition is $13.38 a month. The United States Foundation at the Cité Universitaire offers rooms for $16 a month. Reasonably priced meals are available at the cafeteria.

Universities in other cities stress the study of the French language and literature. There is much to be said for attendance at a provincial university; the student gets a truer picture of French life outside the metropolis, and there are more opportunities for making excursions into the countryside and becoming acquainted with rural France. Fees are about the same as at the Sorbonne; living expenses, if anything, are a little cheaper.

The following universities list special courses for foreigners this summer: University of Lille at Boulogne-sur-Mer, July 17–August 26; University of Aix-Marseilles at Cannes on the Riviera, July 17–September 22; University of Dijon, June 15–October 31; University of Poitiers at La Rochelle, July 15–August 15 and August 15–September 15; University of Poitiers at Tours, July 1–September 30; University of Grenoble, July 1–October 30; University of Toulouse at Bagnères-de-Bigorre in the Pyrenees, July 1–September 12, mountain excursions and sports; University of Nancy, July 9–September 29. Although courses are offered for three months, in most cases students have their choice of four or six weeks' study.

The Institut du Panthéon of Paris has planned a "summer annex" in a group of villas, "Les Fauvettes," on the coast of Brittany. Private lessons will supplement the courses in French. The rates during July and August, inclusive of instruction and living expenses, are from $100 to $120 per month. During the first two weeks in September they are reduced by half.

The Fontainebleau School of Fine Arts and the Fountainebleau Conservatory of Music offer advanced work for American students. They are under the patronage of the government and are administered by French committees, but registration is by recommendation of American committees under the chairmanship of Walter Damrosch. A number of universities and art schools offer annual scholarships. The fee in each school is $500 for three months, tuition and living expenses included. The American offices are at 119 West Nineteenth Street, New York.

Germany

Summer courses in German universities are divided into three main categories: (1) language courses and general courses in German literature, art, philosophy, pedagogy, and the like; (2) advanced or postgraduate work in the sciences and the professions; (3) courses in contemporary civilization organized in a number of universities under the auspices of the German Academic Exchange Service. The last category includes a number of courses which are frankly summaries of the point of view of the National Socialists on politics, economics, and philosophy. Such are Germany Today, August 2–13, and The National Socialist System of Education, July 1–September 1, at the University of Berlin; the Sixth Nordic Vacation Course during July at Jena; Science, Art, and Politics in the New Germany, July 30 to August 25, at the University of Marburg; and Contemporary German Literature and Philosophy, given each month from June through September at the University of Munich. The last-named costs $99.75, instruction, living expenses, sightseeing, and theaters included.

General summer courses are given at the following universities: Bonn, August 1–28; Freiburg, July 24–August 23; Jena, July 18–August 14; Munich, July 15–August 11; Munster, July 8–28; Berlin, July 12–August 22; Hamburg, August 6–September 1; Heidelberg, June 25–August 4; Weimar Jena, July 9–August 17. Fees and living expenses vary but average about $80 a month.

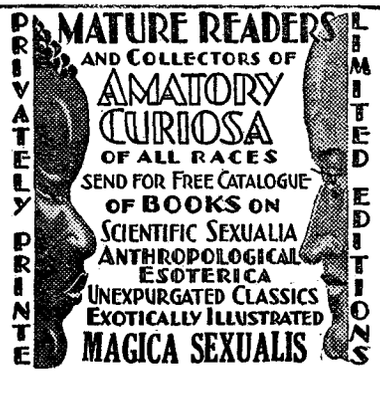
The German Institute for Foreign Students at the University of Berlin offers from July 12 to August 22 summer-school courses which are arranged to conform to courses in American universities. There are five language courses, four for teachers with emphasis on teaching methods in language and literature, and some general cultural courses. The tuition fee is $48.

All the foregoing quotations for Germany may be reduced 15 per cent by the purchase of registered marks before entering Germany. Tuition fees, as well as living expenses, may be paid in registered marks, the only important restriction being that the student must not average more than fifty marks a day. All rail fares in Germany have been reduced 60 per cent for travelers remaining more than seven days in Germany.

JOHN ROTHSCHILD

[*This is the first of two articles on foreign summer schools. The second will appear next week.*]

RACIAL ARTS OF LOVE



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Books, Art, the Dance

Poems

By LIZETTE WOODWORTH REESE

A Soldier's Epitaph

Amen; on the fallen cloak
Let the gray moth gnaw its fill;
And on the bitter sword the rust
Work its red will.

Let thieves break in and steal
All that you hold so fair,
Acres or volumes. Split the pane,
Hack down the stair.

As falcon to the nest,
As lion to the den,
You to your grave. Turn on your arm
And sleep. Amen.

To a Thrush at Twilight

Between the long lanes and the towns,
Break, music, into three.
Dole out your silver to the dusk,
And one by one to me.

Between the long lanes and the towns,
Little and vast do throng,
For your small measure holds in full
The endlessness of song.

Once Upon a Time

Joseph and His Brothers. By Thomas Mann. Translated by H. T. Lowe-Porter. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

THIS first volume of Thomas Mann's new trilogy begins with a moonlit dialogue between the youthful Joseph and his careworn father. It then leaps back to an earlier day, recounts the events of Jacob's previous life, and ends with the death of Rachel. Yet it is not—as an extended introduction makes perfectly explicit—merely an elaborate new version of an ancient tale. Thomas Mann is here seeking to recover a forgotten past far more remote and far less personal than that *temps perdu* which led Proust on his long journey.

History, he says, is an abyss. Every origin we investigate only serves to reveal another more remote, and there is no solid ground upon which we can ever hope to plant our feet. At the thought his brain reels; the plunge he is about to take is a plunge into the bottomless pit. Yet terror is mixed with eagerness and eagerness with exaltation, because the descent is one which he knows he must make. We are part of all that we have known, and the "we" is not merely our individual selves but the humanity to which we belong. All the past is our past; all its memories and its crimes are part of us. To know it is to know ourselves, and only by knowing ourselves can we understand what we are or what we want.

When Joseph told himself the stories which had grown up about his ancestors, his chronology was often confused. He might attribute to his grandfather what had happened to a far more remote figure without even caring to distinguish the one from the other. But Joseph was right, not wrong. Chronology which separates one man from another and one event from the preceding emphasizes a certain fact while it obscures a more fundamental one. Whatever happened to any of ours happened to us; we inherit their experience as we inherit their blood or their history, and that is the fact which counts for most.

Of archaeology in the ordinary sense there is little in this book, for "Joseph and His Brothers" is as far from being a "scientific" re-creation of a material past like "Salambo" as it is from being a modern "interpretation" like "The Brook Kerith." Yet Mann is said to have spent several years in scholarly research and his learning is evident, for he moves with an amazing ease among the conflicting accounts afforded by the various versions of the same legend and among the historical doubts cast by scholarship upon them all. Moreover, he uses this knowledge with extraordinary skill to achieve just that effect of melting outlines which he wishes to create. Specific events emerge for a moment from an obscure background and then are lost as the rolling clouds of uncertainty close over them again. Persons come very close and seem very solid, only, a moment later, to leave us wondering who they were or how we could have been, for an instant, so completely unaware of the centuries which separate them from us. Here, in other words, is a legend which has become full and vivid without losing at any moment the quality characteristic of a legend. And what is true of the acts is true also of the thoughts and the feelings. At moments they are very understandable and very familiar. Joseph, Jacob, and the egregious Sichem are understandable contemporaries; then, a moment later, capable of actions or motives only dimly comprehensible. This past of ours is recoverable only as a sort of dream, and like a dream, it is at once present and far away, clear and incomprehensible. How did Jacob reconcile in his own mind the righteousness in which he and all his should walk with the black treachery practiced by his sons upon the inhabitants of Shechem? That we can only guess, but there is no lack of precision in the picture of the foolish prince conceiving his unlucky passion for the poor little Dinah:

> She had a dark little face with fringes of dark hair under the head cloth, and long narrow eyes of sticky black and a fatal sweetness; they kept going cross-eyed under the gaze of the sore smitten youth. . . . Matters were not improved when she raised her arm to put her hand to the back of her head, exposing to Sichem's gaze the damp curls in the little arm pit, and the delicate small breasts standing out firm under her shift and smock. But almost worst of all were the little gold-brown hands with painted nails, the fingers covered with rings as well; she played with them in her lap, looking wise and childlike at once, and when Sichem thought of how these hands might caress him at their nuptials, his head swam and he gasped for breath.

The total effect of the book is hypnotic and, for that reason, not easy to describe. Nor will the reader find in the introduction any more than a clew to the mood, for it is obvious that the author cannot tell us in so many words what his story means or just why it has come to seem weighted with profound, almost desperate significance. Perhaps when the last volume has appeared questions will be easier to answer, but I suspect that they will not, for the whole experience which Mann is here struggling to communicate is essentially a mystical one, and we are asked to plunge with him into a past whose relevance to ourselves is dimly felt but probably never to be made quite specific. History, he says, is not merely what has happened

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and goes on happening. It is also "the stratified record upon which we set our feet, the ground beneath us; and the deeper the roots of our being go down into the layers that lie below and beyond the fleshy confines of our ego . . . the heavier is our life with thought, the weightier is the soul of our flesh."

In another place Mann speaks of the various layers of significance which, resting one upon another, made up the meaning of certain old tales, and of how Joseph found it impossible to penetrate to the bottommost of the many. One may assume that the meaning of the present novel is similarly stratified and hesitate to say that one even suspects what the deepest meaning is. Perhaps, even, we are not intended to discover it; perhaps at the bottom of everything lies something which is dreamlike in the sense that it is something to which the key could be found only in an experience of the author too intimate to be communicated. It is not certain that even he knows exactly what his dream means, and we are surely no Josephs to interpret it.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Portrait of a Factory

The Land of Plenty. By Robert Cantwell. Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

I DON'T believe it is altogether unintelligent to say that one might best read this book by shutting it off, as it were, from its source. To do so would not necessarily leave it in an academic vacuum. We can safely assume that Mr. Cantwell wrote this novel because its subject matter seemed important to him, because the worker's problem and the set-up of industry interested him profoundly; but we need not get entangled in the thought that "The Land of Plenty" is entirely a product of social consciousness. The current trend, among both those who applaud and those who denounce "proletarian" fiction, is to see its success or failure in its transcription of facts, of known quantities: the novelist simply puts into circulation what is already in existence. As a result, most of the time we attempt to find out how much light has been cast on the author by social conditions, not how much light has been cast on social conditions by the author. But we go to life to corroborate fiction, not to circumscribe it; and I had rather forget, momentarily, what motivated Mr. Cantwell's novel than be worried about whether it dominated it.

"The Land of Plenty" deals with factory life—personnel and plant alike. The story opens with the factory running overtime at night to fill a rush export order; suddenly the lights go out and work is halted. One person after another comes swiftly and naturally upon the scene: Carl, the efficiency expert in charge of personnel; his spineless and sycophantic assistant, Morley; Walt Connor, a worker fresh from college, a grumbler and something of a two-timer; Hagen, a veteran hand with convictions and a will of his own; Hagen's son Johnny, a high-school kid learning the ropes; Sorenson and Winters, two workers of the Hagen type; and finally, summoned from home by the commotion, the hard-drinking manager, MacMahon. The mingling of all these people, against the background of a darkened factory where a hoist man lies mortally injured, produces a hundred incidentals of drama which start the fuse that is later to explode into violence. When the lights go on Carl has discharged Hagen and Winters, only for MacMahon to reinstate them in their jobs.

Soon after, Hagen and Winters get the bounce again, along with a whole raft of others, and this time they precipitate a strike. (There has been a series of wage cuts to justify a strike.) Most of what follows we see through the eyes of Hagen's son, at whose side we stand during the picketing and fighting and with whom—after his father has been shot—we escape by night into the brushwood behind the factory.

There is no focal point to Mr. Cantwell's study of factory life: he gives us the whole length and breadth of the place, its feel and atmosphere, its rush and noise and size, its dozen kinds of work with tools and motors and machines, its dozen kinds of workmen with their group lingo and individual phrases. The picture, it seems to me, is absolute: from it you get the kind of enlightenment you can get only from skilful writing; the "facts" have been reworked, not merely transcribed. So, too, the psychology of many of the people is clearly grasped and converted into fuel for the action of the book: Hagen and his son, Winters, Carl some of the time, Walt Connor here and there, are real people. Morley is a worm—perhaps too strictly a worm to be convincing. MacMahon is vague and a doubtful type of person for the job he fills. The two girl workers seem to me, except in their sex roles, unsuccessful: they make the Micky of "The Shadow Before," for example, seem far truer than I originally felt she was.

Mr. Cantwell's real contribution here to our better understanding of industrial problems today, and to our being better qualified for taking sides concerning them, lies in his exact yet capacious picture of a factory. He has given us, to revive a quaint phrase, a powerful slice of life. That kind of achievement is not—it never was—the highest kind. It is bound to be dry in places, to lack the juice of intimate personal emotions, to lack the strong pulse that beats through the destinies of full-sized, freely moving men and women. Today, however, a slice of life like Mr. Cantwell's seems invigorated by having purpose behind it, where once it was coldly objective. The same feeling of purpose also, unfortunately, leads to a certain distortion. Mr. Cantwell's workers, as a group, have punch, guts, fight in them; his executives and bourgeois—except possibly Carl—are weak and watery and inept. At the very least this fact defies the law of averages; but more than that, it robs the book of a sense of violent clash. Even a dying capitalism can pay for better soldiers than Carl and MacMahon and Morley; taken as a group they disfigure an otherwise provocative and trustworthy book.

LOUIS KRONENBERGER

Vivified History

I, Claudius. By Robert Graves. Harrison Smith and Robert Haas. $3.

IN the curious list of the Roman emperors, Claudius, the fifth Caesar, holds an obscure place. Sandwiched in as he is between two extravagant madmen, Caligula and Nero, Claudius has had very little chance of making a historical name for himself. Scholars may make brief reference to him as a "man of parts," but if the popular mind recalls him at all, it is as an idiot, and a dull one at that. I fancy that with the publication of "I, Claudius" this state of affairs will come to an end, abruptly. I do not mean that Mr. Graves has invested him with gratuitous glamor. Mr. Graves is far too honest for that, but he has put into the mouth of the unfortunate emperor an autobiography of such learning, spirit, and perspicacity that long-dead Claudius ought surely to live again.

It is a matter of historical fact that Claudius, who was regarded even by the majority of his contemporaries as a half-wit, did write, besides a number of learned works, an autobiography. This autobiography has been lost, and Mr. Graves has undertaken to reconstruct or, more truly, to rewrite it. The result is more a history of Rome from the accession of Augustus to the accession of Claudius than it is a life of the latter, since the author has not been niggardly with space or time in recounting the lives of his protagonist's ancestors, friends, relatives, and enemies. Certainly, Claudius is the center of the picture, but it is a tremendous canvas. An account of Julius

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Caesar's bawdy speeches to his soldiers, a debate between Livy and Asinius Pollio, a gladiatorial game, a discussion of marriage and divorce, battle with the Germans—all these things and many others are tossed into the book with an extravagant hand.

The central story concerns the Claudian family. Claudian Livia, third wife to Augustus, is the first of the line to figure in this history, and her descendants include Tiberius, Germanicus, Claudius, Caligula, and Nero. The Claudians were either extremely good or extremely wicked; and Livia was the most wicked of all. Once having gained a hold over Augustus, she was the real ruler of Rome for sixty-seven years, until her death late in the reign of Tiberius. She was a woman both subtle and bold, a poisoner, a liar, and a forger. To strengthen the imperial power and to pass it on to her descendants she would commit acts of melodramatic horror, including the murder of an inconveniently honest son. Her grandson, Claudius, who was at heart a republican and a liberal, was only saved by his stammer and his weak, deformed legs, which gave him the appearance of idiocy. This silly body of his saved him from many things, from the schemes of Livia, the fearful cruelty of Tiberius, the bloodthirstiness of Sejanus, and the madness of Caligula. He was preserved to play the spectator's part in all the intrigues and adulteries of decadent Rome, and, eventually, with Caligula murdered, to be made emperor against his will. Here the autobiography ends. It does not go on to tell that he made a wise and sensible emperor until he fell under the sway of his wife, Messalina, and that, later, he grew frightened and had her murdered, only to be poisoned in turn by his fourth wife, his niece Agrippina. Mr. Graves cannot be blamed for following a historical assumption which makes Claudius end his autobiography with the year 41 A. D.

Likewise he cannot be blamed for the fact that the story falls to pieces after Livia's death, as a melodrama would if the villain were killed at the end of the second act. This is history's fault, not Mr. Graves's. In the same way, though one may tire somewhat of Claudius's temperate style and long for a Juvenal's brazen eloquence to sound out against Rome's vice, still one must admire the author for having kept his narrator so consistently himself. In no respect is Mr. Graves guilty of writing history to suit his fancy, though, if presented with two tenable theories, he will, like any lively biographer, choose the more dramatic. His book is amazingly accurate and well informed, and at the same time full of color and imagination. I hesitate to call it "fictionized history" because of the lurid connotation the Sabatinis and Barringtons have given the phrase. It might be better to say that it is vivified history.

MARY MCCARTHY

Photograph of the Waste Land

Breathe Upon These Slain. By Evelyn Scott. Harrison Smith and Robert Haas. $2.50.

As well as anyone in it, Evelyn Scott appreciates the limitations of her age and time. She has walked widely in the waste land, she has suffered its pains and its disillusionments, she has gone as far as high intelligence, an ardent devotion to her craft, and uncommon talents in the performance of it can take her in the evaluation of the perplexities which mature men and women face today. These are the persons who were, let us say, of age during the World War, those who were born a little in advance of the twentieth century. For them the world was broken in two, and they have not, so far, been able to reconcile the halved segments.

In her latest book Miss Scott lays upon herself handicaps which would, to a novelist of less skill, be insurmountable. She does not merely move her characters within the ordinary make-believe of fiction; she frankly tells her readers that she is only pretending to invent them. This Ethel, she says, who travels to the ends of skepticism and finds nothing, this Tilly with the sparrow hands did not ever exist; they do not even exist in any novel. Yet their lives and those of their sisters and their parents (I cannot say much for the reality of Bartram, living so blankly in India, dying so blankly on the Somme) and their domestics have a quality of credibility that is as definite as woolen cloth, as sharp as the salt air that came up to the bedroom windows at Seabourne. And when the book is finished, it is plain that actually it is not about the Courtney family, who never existed, just as Miss Scott says, but about the death of belief, the end of faith, the breakdown of all the old standards, the familiar manners, the accepted authorities.

Miss Scott, of course, knows very well that faith died because it was not good enough to live, that we lost our gods because they were mortal. Just as she knows that the easy projection, offered by the children of the Waste Landers now coming into their majority, of a materialistic universe in which the masses are exalted at the expense of the once respectable middle class is unsatisfying. These young ones, lost outside any faith, as their fathers were lost inside one, console themselves with loud soap-boxing or brittle cursing of the status quo or lofty dismissals of all that their elders once cherished—or they simply refuse to be consoled at all and quietly despair. Ethel, who couldn't believe anything and yet tried to think there was something to believe, argues with her son, Pat:

> "Darling, you *can't* argue expediency and nothing but! You *must* have reference to something beyond the occasion. . . . Otherwise you hand yourself over to blindness—to living in the dark."
>
> "Well?" he demanded, wheeling about to confront her. "*Aren't* I in the dark? I can see one—perhaps two—steps ahead. The difference between you and me is that I'm not pretending I see what I don't. . . . Whatever the outcome, I shall be buttering more parsnips for the masses than *your* silly generation ever did! And isn't that enough of a reference beyond the present—enough of an end? You've been bred with the spectacle of human slavery and you're calloused!"

Ethel could think of no proper answer except that life was not as simple as all that, to which Pat could retort that complexities such as love, friendship, loyalty, patriotism were luxuries that the world could no longer claim any right to. "But you've not taken death into your calculations," Ethel said. "I should damned well be ashamed of myself if I did such a thing," Pat answered her.

I think it is not too much to say that in "Breathe Upon These Slain" Miss Scott has done in prose what T. S. Eliot did in poetry twelve years ago, and I am quite aware of the quality of that praise. The words she has used to describe the desert of mind and spirit in which the majority of middle-aged persons live, illuminated as it is by mirages marked "revolution," are always clear and never petty or bitter. Incidentally, it is worth pointing out that she is developing a beauty of style that was not present in her earlier books. If one may be captious, there is too much of a familiar ring about certain episodes in this book—the same crowded Victorian parlor with the close, flat smell; the little sister with thin hands who died young; the wives who never fail to come ignorantly to their marriage beds. True enough, the mark of the Victorian tabby cat was on most of us, but there must have been a good number who escaped a permanent tattoo; and thank God we all did not live in that house which Miss Scott so relentlessly describes—so often. But these are relatively minor matters. Evelyn Scott has become one of the first writers of our day; and "Breathe upon These Slain" is her best sign, so far, that she is entitled to that high place.

DOROTHY VAN DOREN

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Soviet Kaleidoscope

Out of Chaos. By Ilya Ehrenbourg. Translated from the Russian by Alexander Bakshy. Henry Holt and Company. $2.50.

IT is an interesting aspect of a novel like "Out of Chaos," and true for most of the novels reflecting the industrial epic in Russia, that psychological realism in the treatment of character persists along with the journalistic presentation of those specific and transitory problems that have arisen in the Soviet Union. In a sense the Russian novelist has no choice but to become a propagandist. The terrific import of the revolution and the fact that few aspects of Soviet culture have become crystallized and static inevitably impose on him an orientation toward the themes of industrialization and the conflict between the old and the new. It is the nature of things, and not any political fiat, that has deprived the Soviet novelist of autonomy; and his problem at the moment would seem to be not so much the relation between propaganda and art as the problem of conserving character portrayal, and other aesthetic elements of the novel, within the framework of a topical theme and a journalistic rapidity of narration. Politically, "Out of Chaos" is a sympathetic yet not uncritical picture of the building of a giant steel plant in Siberia. Aesthetically, it is a detailed and convincing study of the psychological evolution of three characters: Kolka Rzhanov, a young shock-brigader who identifies himself wholly with Soviet construction; Volodia Safonov, the intellectual who passes from doubt and skepticism to suicide; and Irina, who in renouncing her love for Volodia rejects all that is identified with the old order, all indecision and defeatism.

"Fly-by-nights came to snap up government coats. The peasants came to earn something for a cow. Members of the Young Communist League came to build a Giant. Some were led by hunger, others by faith. . . . Those who failed to get into the barracks burrowed dugouts. A man came to the place, and instantly, like a wild beast, began to burrow a hole." Chaos in the spiritual world; in the physical world a confusion of barracks, blast furnaces, steam shovels, cranes, and hoists; death from freezing and typhus—this was the reality of the Five-Year Plan at Kuznetsk. This was the embattled world in which Kolka Rzhanov found the answer to his boredom, a complete way of living, the integration of his personality, and an outlet for all his aggressive instincts. At the same time, in the Soviet university at Tomsk, Volodia Safonov observed the inhumanity, the crassness, the terrific power and buoyancy of the revolution, and yet remained aloof. He found that his comrades could not "speak like human beings, making mistakes, stammering, with fire . . . of that which is personal." Volodia did not believe that a blast furnace was more beautiful than Venus, he did not "explain Dr. Faust's boredom by the peculiarities of the period of initial accumulation of capital." Though he was too young to remember the old regime, he suffered from the "hereditary illness" of introspection. He lacked faith and optimism; his sensibilities were still individual and aesthetic. He could not adapt himself to a world that recognized action as the only form of behavior, and he found in suicide the one gesture of self-assertion left to him.

Technically, the novel borrows from the cinema. In order to show the chaos of the revolution, the simultaneity of conflicting occurrences, the eye of the author ranges over all Russia, catches an event in sharp, visual impressions. Frequently the attention of the reader is concentrated wholly on things, on objects in motion, as a symbolism for building up both mood and background. There are thirty-two characters in all, some represented only by short biographies. But wherever he deals extensively with a case history, Ehrenbourg notwithstanding his

The old challenge

LEARN TO WRITE!

IT may sound bromidic to many of you, but Dorothea Brande has freshened it up this season in a little book which has reen slipping out of our office at the rate of 250 a week (exhausting the first printing sans ballyhoo); and bringing into the files such astonishing comments as these:

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sympathy with the ultimate aims of communism, reserves the novelist's prerogative—that is, he shows the complex, subjective motivation under the new, socialized sensibilities of his characters.

GERTRUDE DIAMANT

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The Elder Henry James. By Austin Warren. The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

Alice James: Her Brothers, Her Journal. Edited by Anna Robeson Burr. Dodd, Mead and Company. $2.50.

THE reader of these two volumes cannot help being struck by the continuous emergence and assertion of something —a tone, a conviction, an emphasis—to which he has already many times responded in the novels and tales of the younger Henry James. Something pervasive in the works of the son, it is more often than not eloquently stated in the quoted utterances of the father; and it is implicit in the very texture of the daughter's life and experience. It becomes fully articulate in such a passage as this, for example, from the elder James:

> [Man] *in so far as he is man,* does not exist to sense, *but only to consciousness,* and consequently human nature properly speaking is not a thing of physical but of strictly moral attributes. In so far as man exists to sense he is identical with mineral, vegetable, and animal; and it is only as he exists to consciousness, that he becomes naturally differentiated or individualized from these lower forms, and puts on a truly human, which is an exclusively moral, personality.

Such a statement as this deserves our closest attention because it really supplies what was from first to last the credo of the Jameses—the insistence on the moral consciousness as the area of greatest interest and importance, the proper object of study, the ultimate field of reference for all researches in philosophy, literature, and life. It also enables us to appreciate to what a real extent the elder James was the father of his family —in the intellectual or spiritual as well as in the consubstantial sense.

Most of Mr. Warren's excellent biography is quite naturally concerned with tracing out the rather complex intellectual evolution of James from his early days at the Princeton Theological Seminary to his very special position as nonconformist-at-large in the literary societies of New York and Cambridge. As a successful philosopher James appears to have been handicapped both by an incapacity to give himself completely to any existent system of ideas and a reluctance to construct a sufficiently dogmatic system of his own. He admired Swedenborg but he could not tolerate the Swedenborgians. He found much in Fourier to which his passion for social justice and reform responded, but he could not approve of the dislocations of sexual morality involved in life in the "phalansteries." The result was that James came to settle more and more in an attitude of broad philosophic tolerance whose only boundaries were his own highly refined and highly personal sense of moral integrity. But if he suffered in popularity and influence he gained in an inner feeling of superiority to the social and intellectual world around him—a feeling that was to become thereafter a family heritage. In Bronson Alcott, for example, he pointed out that "the moral sense was wholly dead, and the aesthetic sense had never been born." His *obiter dicta* upon his other contemporaries were no less caustic: Emerson "never felt a movement of the life of conscience from the day of his birth till that of his death"; Hawthorne had the look "of a rogue who suddenly finds himself in a company of detectives"; and Thoreau was "the most childlike, unconscious, and unblushing egotist" whom he had ever met. Always the objection was to some deficiency or crudity of moral perception in the people among whom he was condemned to live his life. But the truth was that his independence had resulted in such a refinement of his own values of what was right and wrong, his own perceptions and judgments, that he was literally at home nowhere in the world.

It is no difficult transition to the truly brilliant and in every respect remarkable journal that Alice James wrote and dictated during the last few years of her life. Stranded in Victorian England, waiting impatiently but never despondently for a death that was slow in coming, this daughter of the Jameses had little support outside the hereditary superiority—expressed with a more acerb tartness, it may be said, than any other member of the family ever achieved. Of "the coarse possibilities of the British fiber" she offers at least half a hundred examples: Queen Victoria's precautions lest any of her subjects view the sculptor's models of "the Royal forms" before they were properly draped; Gladstone's hypocritical treatment of Parnell; the London reviewer's pronouncement that Emily Dickinson was "fifth-rate." (It may be incidentally remarked that the quality of Alice James's prose is like nothing so much as the most characteristic verse of Emily Dickinson.) At times her indignation expresses itself with a startling viciousness, as when she finishes a story of an Englishman who sends his boys back to England to be educated with the observation, "If they are to be an ornament to their country, 'tis surely wise to take measures to develop their instincts for slaughter." She possesses the family gift for the memorable phrase and epithet, as when she describes Sarah Bernhardt as "a moral abscess, festering with vanity," or the Broad Catholic Church as "the centimeter of washed-out Anglican evasions," or a young English boy whom she has met as "so clean and inarticulate." But this is to suggest too wanton an application of the well-known Jamesian superiority. The positive side comes out in her uncomplaining acceptance of her lot, her strength in suffering, her tough-minded intolerance of sham even in herself. She illustrated all the rewards of the Jamesian jewel without price—"a moral passion which can know no material obstruction; for which sorrow, loneliness, and pain are food; which seeketh not for pleasure, but waiteth patiently till it flowers in happiness."

In view of what these two books once again recall to us, it seems incredible that none of the contributors to the current *Hound and Horn,* which is a kind of *hommage* in the best French manner to Henry James the younger, saw fit to give any emphasis to the place and importance of morals in the work of that novelist. Undoubtedly, every one of these critics was motivated by an admiration or at least respect for James's accomplishment; but from a reading of most of their essays one might deduce that his novels have as little to do with moral problems as with astronomy or bacteriology. (Exceptions may be made for R. P. Blackmur's excellent critical résumé of the Prefaces and for Francis Fergusson's penetrating remarks on "The Golden Bowl.") What the most recent criticism of James, with its Marxian overtones and resolutions, has in common with the criticism of the last generation, with its sociological and psychological simplifications, is the inability to understand that for James the moral sensibility happened to exist with such vitality and complexity as to constitute perhaps the most fertile terrain available to the novelist. It is impossible to reestablish James for his "art" as long as one declines to recognize the absolute identity between everything that we understand by his form and technique and his interest in the personality, the "exclusively moral personality." In the moral wilderness in which the novelist is at present forced to work out some role for himself, the art of James is bound to exercise a very special charm and fascination. But it is a charm and fascination belonging quite irrevocably to the past; and the art can no more be called back to the living than can the now long extinct values on which it was built.

WILLIAM TROY

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Shorter Notices

Our Daily Bread. By Gösta Larsson. The Vanguard Press. $2.50.

Written in English by a Swedish-American, this novel follows the fortunes of a worker's family in Malmö through the Swedish general strike. The preliminary chapters reveal a decent and patient father, a somewhat more passionate mother, a poetic son, and several younger children whose happiness depends upon the household peace. This peace is idyllically described as having the power to survive such poverty as threatens a modest artisan's home; but in the end it is invaded and destroyed by a skirmish of the class war, and the Hammar family is left suspended between the despair and the exaltation which war can bring. Mr. Larsson writes not without power and accuracy, but his novel loses its full effect by borrowing too much from the already familiar proletarian pattern, so that it is not quite as convincing as at first it sounds.

Bassett. By Stella Gibbons. Longmans, Green and Company. $2.

If cleverness and originality and a keen perception of false notes in the writing of her contemporaries could make Miss Gibbons a first-rate novelist, she would have attained that eminence with her first book, "Cold Comfort Farm," and its follower, "Bassett." The former was a burlesque on the novel of the soil with a capital "S"; the latter is a more restrained account of what happened in two country houses only irrelevantly related to each other. In the one lived a helpless, gently bred old maid who was rescued from starvation and persecution at the hands of her cook and housemaid by a brittle little cockney from London. In the other a dilettante brother and sister spent their bright days chaffing each other, listening to Bach, and breaking any more tender hearts that happened to pass their way. All this, of course, is of little consequence except that the hearts do seem authentically to break, and the bright days do seem fresh and sparkling. In other words, Miss Gibbons can make her reader see what she bids him see, if only for a moment. But she must shortly begin to settle down, to bend her wit to her will, to build her novels more carefully, to remember that if life is ill-formed and restless and accidental, art cannot be. Novel writing, although critics and readers may often rightly feel that current novels belie it, is a serious business and should be undertaken not only with brains but with prayer.

Jonah's Gourd Vine. By Zora Neale Hurston. J. B. Lippincott Company. $2.

The life story of a black Paul Bunyan in the deep South, who started as a cotton hand and ended a preacher who could wring the hearts of his congregation with his golden tongue. A book about Negroes by a young colored woman, it has a freshness and confidence impossible to a white person writing of the same milieu. It is refreshing also in that it does not deal with the relations of Negroes and white, but merely of men and women—whose skins, incidentally, are black—with each other. The atmosphere is rich and highly affecting; the cotton-country speech is laden with humor, ancient poetry, and folk wisdom. John, the hero, has a folk quality, a superhuman strength, beauty, eloquence, and generosity that make him irresistible to all the other characters, particularly to the women, and charming to the reader. The book is the saga of John Buddy who rose to glory and fell and settled to a brief quiet before a violent death. Certain faults in construction, certain telescopings of years and events do not matter, if the book is read thus as an abundant fairy tale. It would be presumptuous, even, to hope

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that these faults, peculiar often to a first novel by a young person, be corrected, for they are negligible beside Miss Hurston's enviable gifts of vitality and the bright, swift word.

Youth Immortal. A Life of Robert Herrick. By Emily Easton. Houghton Mifflin Company. $3.

This somewhat sugary volume adds nothing of importance to the "Life" by Moorman, though much is made of the Julia poems as being autobiographical. There is no evidence beyond the poems themselves, which can be read with equal plausibility as works of pure—and impure—imagination. More creditable and convincing is Miss Easton's attempt to claim high merit for Herrick's religious verse.

The Dance

"Kykunkor"; Native African Opera

EVERY so often New York is the ground for exotic and extraneous spectacles which, having their debut in out-of-the-way corners, eventually come uptown with the added prestige of discovery. In fact, it may soon be good policy to open up obliquely to insure a direct hit. Thus the African "opera" was to be seen at the Unity Theater on Twenty-third Street and for a few performances at the City College Auditorium, and is now, perhaps for its duration, at the small hall on top of the Chanin Building, Forty-second Street and Lexington Avenue.

Asadata Dafara, a native of Sierra Leone in West Africa, described in his program as "the greatest living authority on African art," gathered together a few fellows of his continent and a few more now living in Harlem, and modestly but with energy compiled an evening's show. The show is interesting, although it is neither a consistent dramatic whole, nor an "authentic" piece of anthropology, nor an "artistic" experience.

What is impressive is the remarkable dancing of three male Negroes, two part Arab and one from nearer the Congo. The first dancer, pale tan, his face whiskered with white marks like a blonde tiger, to the accompaniment of four rich drums executes a remarkable series of swift movements of arms and feet, fluently sexual and intense. He seems to wash himself, armpit, back, belly, and crotch. He exhibits a high potential of concentrated, breathing action, animal and subhumanly skilful. Then Abdul Assen as a witch doctor, or rather as a Mohammedan witch doctor accidentally on a New York stage, exorcises a devil out of a bridegroom. This performance, commencing with a falsetto melody on a reedy pipe and with invocations to the Allah of a wooden mask, develops into a frenzy of self-hypnosis, diabolical gaiety, anguish, and success which is fiercely dramatic because it is experienced. Abdul Assen dispossesses the bridegroom every night around 10:15, but it is always more of a black sacrament than a good performance. There is also an anonymous, very black Negro, his face picked with white lines, his belly fat and loose, who dances an ambiguous, shifting step, immediately convincing in its authentic effeminacy, like a living accompaniment to a chapter from Leo Frobenius.

For the rest there is a superb and monstrous black Golliwog King who splutters with benevolent tyranny in French and African, one mad eye whitened, his leopard skins flapping and enormous orange bracelets clacking around his flat feet. The leopard man and a paler companion support the old chief with a simulation of affectionate and ferocious enslavement, which may be no joke. Back stage after the performance must be a tricky place for a white man to navigate. It's not back stage to some of the performers.

The accompanying music is puzzling. Some of the songs seem West African, some North—Tunisian or Moroccan; and there are traces of Methodist missionary hymns and the effective, if hardly legitimate, interpolation of some melodies from Martinique. George Antheil's admirable chapter on Negro music in Nancy Cunard's recently published anthology on the Negro will make the salad of sound a little more clear, if no more consistent.

Harlem has contributed five little brown girls with straightened hair and more than a hint of Cotton Club can-cans. The steps they have been taught are for the most part innocent of much thought, monotonous and tedious to watch, though they may be fun to do. The costumes grow more "authentic," that is, more Broadway African and less Harlem lamp-shade African, every week; and the lighting is pure amateur-theatrical and right enough, except that red and green gelatine on brown and black skin gives a mud sheen that is not much help.

But no one who has a genuine interest in such sudden, occasionally very intense, and never very perfect demonstrations should fail to see this. There is little danger of its becoming a cult like, for example, "Four Saints in Three Acts," because so much of it is unrelieved and hard to look at. Nevertheless, one visit is more rewarding than any other recital has been this spring.

LINCOLN KIRSTEIN

Art

American Folkways

THE main current in art this season has run in the direction of murals. Given impetus by World's Fair and PWAP jobs, it has now acquired the status of a "movement," whose chief standard bearers are the painter Benton and the critic Craven. Mural painting, as understood by most American artists now working on walls or hunting for them, seems to imply mural painting with social content, and the meaning of this term, as expressed in most sketches and finished works, seems to be a vague general sympathy for the "plain man," usually exemplified by the rugged farmer; a love of the idea of labor, again usually represented by agricultural labor; and a sympathetic emphasis on American folkways, with "American" underscored.

This combination of arcadian-American murals is what optimistic critics refer to when they say "American renaissance," meaning birth, not rebirth, of American art. Unquestionably it does embrace the cleanest, most honest work so far done in this country today, and certainly it springs from a healthy impulse; but it seems to me to be headed into a blind alley.

The driving force in the American-mural movement is the artists' search for a "place" in the modern American set-up. The depression and the accompanying crippled art market revealed that expensive little oil paintings and prints were objects for the luxury trade, remote economically and spiritually from the main channels of national life and therefore offering no firm emotional or financial foothold to any artist taking himself seriously. So a migration from the galleries began to take place, many artists abandoning painting and sculpture entirely for industrial designing, which is to a serious degree an extension of advertising and suffers from the appalling pseudo-culture stigmata which James Rorty has described in his new book, "Our Master's Voice."

Murals paid for by the government or by leading industrialists are now another hope. Most artists believe that to the

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THE COOK MAKES A POINT

"We can't go to Europe," said the Duchess, "Exchanges have gone up."

The cook sneezed, partly because of pepper and partly out of contempt. "Would this soup I'm stirring cost any more in Europe?" she asked.

"Liras, francs and shillings and all those things cost more," said the Duchess thoughtfully.

"I don't use them," snapped the cook. "I use beef and carrots and leeks."

• • •

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MARY OF SCOTLAND. Alvin Theater. An outstanding dramatic hit but one which left me a little cold.

MEN IN WHITE. Broadhurst Theater. Fine teamwork on the part of the members of the Group Theater helps to make this play about a young doctor one of the things which must not be missed.

NEW FACES. Fulton Theater. Intimate review rather in the manner of the Garrick Gaities. Some amusing sketches.

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TOBACCO ROAD. 48th Street Theater. Superb performance by Henry Hull in a grotesquely humorous play about total depravity as exhibited by the poor whites of Georgia. Dramatized from a novel by Erskine Caldwell and not likely to be forgotten even by those who find it a little too strong for their stomachs.

Allen Tate's review of T. S. Stribling's "Unfinished Cathedral," which was announced for this issue, will appear next week.

extent that these murals are government jobs they offer a greater freedom and scope for experimentation and advance, and when they say this they usually have the Mexican precedent in mind. They forget, however, that the situation here is entirely different. The Mexican muralists were paid by a government anxious to prove itself revolutionary, therefore willing, for a while at least, to give its spokesmen great leeway; furthermore it was a government put in power by an agrarian, anti-feudal revolution (the classic "bourgeois revolution"), and therefore the distribution of land, the glorification of the native peasant, and the expression of nationalism as against foreign domination, which were the stuff of Mexican muralist content, were political, economic, emotional current issues corresponding to a national reality. And finally, American artists ignore, or forget, that the Mexican renaissance died because the Mexican revolution, when only half finished, was throttled.

In the United States the distribution of land, the glorification of the farmer, and the assertion of nationalist as against foreign imposed values are not genuine national issues. The great mass of people in our country are, it is true, looking for a new way to live; but they have their eyes on our industrial and scientific achievements, the conflicts which these have generated, the hope they contain. "Back to the land" is obviously no economic or social solution in a land of surpluses, and emotionally it is plainly the road backward—an escape into grandfather's ruggedly peaceful days, a negative formula.

Therefore it does not provide a genuine bridge from the ivory tower to that place in the popular mind and heart within which great artists of the past have always worked, and especially artists with a public function such as muralists exercise. It does, indeed, provide refreshment, reassurance, relief, to tired city intellectuals, and since this is a desirable quality in government and big business works, a good many artists may find in the American folkways mural a better living than that provided by the haphazard chances of a private luxury market. However, by such work artists take a noncommittal, evasive position in regard to the big issues of the day; they must if they want to be paid by the forces upholding the status quo. But just the same, in doing so they inevitably end up in the safe isolation which capitalism develops, in various forms, to protect itself from the honest, invincible courage indispensable to great art.

ANITA BRENNER

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